Oda Nobuna no Yabou Volume2

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著者

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信奈が天下布武の拠点とした岐阜城へと登ってきました。やたら人に慣れたリスがいっぱいいました。ところで『織田信奈の野望』がドラマCDになりました。ぜひ聴いてください。

イラスト

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原画家・イラストレーター。

小説からゲームまで幅広い分野で、イラストを手がけている。画集『カスタムメイド・ガール』（アスキー・メディアワークス）が、好評発売中。

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なぜか戦国時代に飛び込んでしまった高校生の相良良晴は、尾張の姫大名、織田信奈と出会った。良晴は信奈にサル呼ばわりされてこき使われたり、桶狭間の戦いで活躍をしたりと、少しずつその時代に馴染んで過ごしていた。

そんな中、信奈と近江の浅井長政の縁談が持ち上がった。想定外の事態に驚愕し、動揺する信奈の家臣団。良晴は信奈に諫言して縁談を阻止したいが、身分はまだ侍大将。一刻も早く美濃の稲葉山城攻略という大功を立てなければならないと焦る。

だが、その良晴の前に美濃の堅固な稲葉山城と謎の天才軍師・竹中半兵衛が立ちふさがる。あせる良晴はどう行動するのか……。天下布武ラブコメディからますます目が離せない！

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GA文庫
春日みかげの本

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「わわわわたし、昔からいぢめられ癖があって……
わたし、おめん子なんです」

柴田勝家
蜂須賀五右衛門
丹羽長秀
前田犬千代

Chapter 1: Nobuna being asked for marriage!

The era is Sengoku. The location is the province of Owari, in the town surrounding Kiyosu castle.

The princess ruling over the province of Owari, Oda Nobuna, was called a fool and laughed at by the world.

But this foolish way of hers, was it in order to catch the enemy off guard, or was she some genius tragically misunderstood by the current era? People began to question after the renowned Battle of Okehazama, in which Imagawa Yoshimoto, who was called [Tokaido's No. 1], personally led her unparalleled attack with an army 10 times larger than Oda Nobuna's.

In the end, Imagawa was defeated under the lead of Shibata Katsuie and Nobuna's ministers. The one who defeated the confident Imagawa Yoshimoto was no other than Owari's stupid princess Oda Nobuna.

Now, as if Oda Nobuna is planning something, she is being very mean. After the battle of Okehazama, the living conditions of Oda's ministers had not improved at all. Sagara Yoshiharu, a modern Japanese high school student who mysteriously appeared in this dangerous

sengoku era and had discovered Imagawa's base, thus contributing greatly to the victory of that battle, is now still leading the miserable life of one vege soup per meal.

Currently, it is the middle of summer.

Even though it was barely dawn, Yoshiharu was lying wide awake on his threadbare futon, soaked with his nighttime sweat.

Once full of confidence to sleep through anything, Sagara who is at least planning to lie in bed some more, can only admit defeat. His back is full of sweat, and it is somehow warm too. So, he unwillingly opened his eyes while muttering "So hot, don't they have Air Conditioning here?"

"Fu, fu fu"

Upon opening his eyes, one can see his ninja subordinate, Hachisuka Goemon hugging the pillar while sleeping on the roof's beam. Goemon might be a loli ninja, but she leads the fierce Kawanamishuu. Besides that, she has the habit of biting her tongue after 30 syllables.

No matter what, she is still Sagara's subordinate. But no matter how much he tries to persuades her to sleep on the tatami, she refuses and says that the roof is enough for her. It's worrying the she does not listen to him, but even when she agreed to come down, she planned to bury herself using her ninja skills instead.

In the end, Sagara gave up persuading her and let her sleep on the roof, but...

Seeing her sleeping posture, Sagara becomes worried that she might fall down from the roof. But there is a culprit more troublesome who disturbs Sagara's slumber. After the Battle of Okehazama, the reward Nobuna gave Sagara was the little girl, Nene. Though only 8 years old, she already has a sharp tongue.

Because of Sagara's wish to be affectionate with a pretty girl, Nene was given to him as a god-sister. Nene even swore that she will shoulder the responsibility of not letting Sagara touch any girls.

“Nobuna you bastard, how much do you hate me?" Sagara often grumbled. In reply, Nene said "I will definitely change Onii-sama's habit of chasing after girls, and follow him around all the time."

Noticing the difference between modern Japan and the sengoku era, Sagara initially planned *Since I'm living alone, I should get some girls to have fun*, but the current situation makes any possible chance hopeless. Though, when she is sleeping, she is still very cute.

"...I finally know why it's so hot. Nene, don't stick so close to my back." Children's body temperatures are really high. During Sagara's sleep, Nene wrapped her hands around his neck and hugged his back while still half asleep. Because of this, Sagara's temperature had also risen more than 100 percent.

"......fu, fu fu. Onii-sama, don't go chasing girls around. .." Even in sleep, she is still blocking Sagara's only interest.

"Oi, its hot, let go."

"Fu, fu, fu"

"I.....I can't get out."

And Sagara's back is already very wet.

"Is it sweat? But why is it a bit warm?"

No matter how Nene sticks to me, I can't possibly have that much sweat.

....

Sagara noticed.

Ah?

Don't tell me, this...

isn't.....sweat?!

No...

"Oi, Nene, did you wet your bed? And you even urinated on my back?!"

"Hmmm?"

The one sticking to Sagara's back, Nene, finally opened her eyes.

“..... Uuuuuu.. Eh?...”

While still drowsy, she used her little hand to rub her eyes.

“Stop uuuuu-ing! Did you mistake my back with the toilet? Oioi, why is it still coming?”

“.....Uuuuu....”

“Listen, Nene, you are already 8 years old. It's time for you to change your habit of wetting beds. It would be strange if you did not wet your bed after shouting 'So hot , so hot' and drinking so much water before you slept last night! As your brother, I will have to teach you properly today!”

“....uuuu... uuuu”

“Eh? What word starts with uuu?" Sagara tilted his head, not understanding.

“.....UuuuuuAhhhhhhhh~~” Nene started crying!

The soundwaves start hitting Sagara's eardrum!

“.....UuuuuuWahhhhhhhh~~”

“Wa...What? What is this sound-wave weapon?!”

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh~~”

“Ahhh, Nene, I'm wrong! Sorry! I've said too much!”

“....how can I sleep with this noise, Sagara-shi." Goemon stared at Sagara while opening her eyes.

Rumors say that since Ninjas need no sleep for a few days and nights, they sleep like a corpse when they are resting. Once they decided to sleep, before their sleeping time is up, they won't wake up even if you fire a cannon beside their bed or knock the gong.

As the current loli ninja covered her ears and screamed "Noisy!" it can be seen that Nene's cries' decibel is already very horrible.

“Uwahhhh~Onii-sama is mad!!”

“I'm wrong! Nene, I beg you not to cry anymore. Come come, wipe your nose! If your face is full of snot,

won't the reputation of the number one small beauty of Owari go down!?”

“Reputation... go down....? Uwahhhhhhh~”

“Uhhh~! How can you calm down!?”

“A slash at the neck using this ninja's dagger will fix this”

“She will die if you do that! Ahh, more importantly, I should take my futon and dry it outside”

“Ah, you wanna run from this, Sagara-shi?”

“I leave the rest to you, Goemon!”

“I I I I I'm not used to handling kids! Shaghara(Sagara) -shi is so bad!”

Goemon bit her tongue! - Though this is not the time to play the straight man[1].

Not wasting a single second, I have to run away from the area of Nene's sound-wave attack.

Free~dom!

Sagara hastily ran to the courtyard with the futon, but his neighour Inuchiyo was already standing there.

“.....Day after day, so noisy.....”

Wearing pajamas and holding her usual bamboo spear , her attire is so messy that one can almost see her chest area.

Though her breasts are still like a small flower bud waiting to bloom, the leader of the Maeda clan, Maeda Inuchiyo is already a beautiful young girl. Honestly, Inuchiyo is still young, but if she went out to Japan's Akihabara like this, the otakus would definitely be so happy that they would dance on the spot.

Sagara couldn't help but stare at Inuchiyo; his consciousness took a moment to fully return.

“Oi, Inuchiyo? What's with your attire! Wear your clothes properly!”

“.....Shirking responsibility. You are the one who did this.”

“Huh? What?”

Inuchiyo is sleepwalking! And coincidentally, because she was awaken halfway during her sleep, her brain is still left with fragments of Sagara lusting over her. From the looks of it, her anger meter seems to be at the MAX!

“.....Properly.....take responsibility.”

The bamboo spear in her hands coldly stab towards Sagara.

“Inuchiyo-san?! Please wake up!!!”

Dodging left and right, Sagara thinks to himself,

Everyone on the Oda family is a handful.

After such a noisy morning, Sagara and Inuchiyo head to Aoshuu.

Last night, Nobuna ordered the both of them to buy some delicious Uiroumochi, Hatcho Miso and thick soy sauce as there will be a guest coming today. An Owari specialty, the Uiroumochi is used to reward Nobuna's brother Nobukatsu and her ministers. It isn't too sweet upon eating, and the aftertaste is fresh, so Sagara soon developed quite a liking to it too.

But....

“Hatcho Miso and thick soy sauce.....huh?”

Walking together with Inuchiyo on the streets of Aoshuu, Sagara starts muttering to himself. Beside him, while happily eating tea-flavored Uiroumochi, Inuchiyo asked, "Both of them are delicious. Sagara, you don't like them?”

“It's not that I don't like them; the flavour is just too thick.”

Hatcho Miso is the specialty of Mikawa's Okazaki Hatcho Village. From the outside, its red in colour. As for the taste, it's not as sweet compared to Sagara's favourite rice miso, and its rather bitter at the start.

But for reasons unknown, the people of Owari love this flavour. Shibata Katsuie will even gluttonously put this hatcho miso on top of her shaved ice during summer , eating it in high spirits. Once Sagara carelessly but honestly said “Wa, miso-flavoured shaved ice sounds disgusting.” In the end, Katsuie almost broke his back in anger.

As for the Soy sauce, it is an extremely heavily flavoured sauce that has gained much popularity in Owari nowadays. Sometimes, Sagara will dip a bit of it while eating sashimi, but Katsuie will just put this on top of her shaved ice and etc etc.

In conclusion, 70% of the dining tables in Owari will have hatcho miso, and the rest of them will have soy sauce. While living in Aoshuu, Sagara often thought *Why do all of them like such a thick flavour?* helplessly. But from the situation, it seems that they have not yet discovered a way to lighten the sauces during this era.

“I recommend this shop. It's fresh and cheap, and the flavour is thick too.”

Inuchiyo brings Sagara to a shop called Sukagi-ya. (醋)

Inside the shop is full of the different types of miso and sauces, but outside, there is a bunch of snacks and steaming hot noodles. Add this to the current trend, this shop “Drinking tea” has the additional use as a teashop, and it's actually quite a unique shop.

“It's good if its fresh and cheap, but isn't the flavour a bit too thick? I still think lighter...”

“Shut up and buy it." Sagara's face was pinched and was dragged over.

Though her body is small, Inuchiyo has strong hands.

“I know I know.....! But, I seem to have heard of this shop before.”

“There's a lot of Sukagi-yas around in Owari. All the products are cheap and fresh, and the flavour is thick too , it has become a gathering place for young girls.”

“I get it, using the words of my era, this seems like a hang out for high school girls.”

Inuchiyo stared intently at the shopkeeper, all the while maintaining a .....silence. Eventually the shopkeeper broke down crying and they got a good price . Because of this, after buying the stuff they wanted they still had a bit of money left.

“Since there is still time, why don't we get some Uiroumochi before going back?”

“.....Sagara wants to flirt with girls.”

"Ok, ok. White, black, tea, red bean, sakura; I will treat you to all 5 colours of Uiroumochi!"

"....Uhhh, I can't reject...."

All 5 flavours of Uiroumochi at one time! Inuchiyo let out a pant "ha ha" not unlike a dog while thinking of it breathlessly.

The two of them sat at a corner of the teashop, eating Uiroumochi and looking at the people walking through the streets. After Nobuna defeated the enemy of the North, Imagawa Yoshimoto, the city of Aoshuu let out a breath of relief, and is beginning to be bustling again. Since the nemesis of Owari, Imagawa, is gone, the expressions of the pedestrians seem to be more relaxed.

As expected, peace seems to be the most important thing in the sengoku era, Sagara realized. If Nobuna is able to unite the world, the war-ridden Japan will also stop their fights and the whole country can be as peaceful as this city.

"Not bad, not bad. There is quite a lot of young and energetic girls."

"…Sagara, there is one too, at the side."

“Eh? Inuchiyo can be considered energetic too?”

“…Can be.... I think.”

“Oh? That bunch of people is...”

From where Sagara is pointing, one can see a bunch of warriors. The black hair guy sitting on the horse should be the swordsman, and those young warriors surrounding him should be his men.

Though the looks of his men had already captured the attention of the city girls, one can see that the swordsman's look far surpassed that of his men. Sorrowful eyes, long eyelashes, fair skin, these features bring a sense of dignity. Hikaru Genji[2] must have been like this when he was young too.

The city's girls have already surrounded the group, all the while shrieking with delight. Because of this, Sagara's existence hasn't been noticed at all.

Well, even if he was noticed, they will say “Hey, there's a monkey!” or “Nobuna-sama's monkey escaped to the streets” or “Don't get seduced by the Uiroumochi!” and raise a small ruckus at best.

"Che, that guy who is riding on the white horse seems to have the looks of a gigolo. Even as a guy, I thinks that his looks are quite good."

"…Pond Noodles[3]. The noodles here are flat."

"He seems to be clever too, he should be much more popular than Nobukatsu. Damn, this admiration of mine pisses me off."

"…flat noodles."

But, the flags carried by this group of warriors have not been seen in Owari before.

Three flower petals on three tortoise shells.

Sagara and Inuchiyo listen hard, eavesdropping on the conversation of that gigolo swordsman and his men.

"Master, I heard that the idiotic princess of Owari often walks the streets with a monkey face."

"If she saw this cute face of master, she might discover her girly side."

Such cold conversation, this young swordsman seems to have no interest in Nobuna as a man.

“At the charm of master, the monkeys of Owari will only submit to us.”

“To think that you have to marry such an idiotic princess, master is so pitiful.”

“Political marriages are a common thing in this sengoku era, there is no need to let all the girls love you.”

“Master, all the girls will cry if they know you are doing this. To abandon so many girls, there might be some who might even consider suicide."

“Girls who think they can do anything in this sengoku era are pathetic, they are all only chess pieces.”

"Damn! Those people really pisses me off!" Sagara cannot help but scold those people.

“It's ok if you treat Nobuna like a monkey, but I can't forgive anyone who treats girls as playthings! It has nothing to do with treating Nobuna like an idiot!”

Squinting her eyes while looking at the flag of these people who walk past, Inuchiyo lowered her voice and said "This pattern, three flower petals on 3 tortoise shells, they are not part of Nobuna's army."

“Don't tell me they are the guests that Nobuna is entertaining? Arrogant people like this? “

“…I don't think so. Since we are buying so much hatcho miso, the one who is coming should be the bespectacled tanuki.”

“Bespectacled tanuki?”

The bespectacled tanuki is referring to Mikawa, Okazaki city's Motoyasu Matsudaira. Her purpose is to sign a peace treaty with Nobuna. Motoyasu Matsudaira, the one who will eventually change her name to Tokugawa Ieyasu. A tragic princess daimyo who had to bury her ambitions deep inside her heart, her province is trapped right in the middle by Owari's Oda clan and Imagawa Yoshimoto.

When she was young, she was once kidnapped by the Imagawa clan as a hostage, and was later taken to Owari by Oda Nobuhide, Nobuna's father. In the end, she was used as a trading chip and sold back to Imagawa. Her

early tragic life can be described as a ball being kicked around. Because of the battle of Okehazama, the once lackey of Imagawa Yoshimoto, who received news that Imagawa Yoshimoto has been defeated, hastily retreated her army to Okazaki city and proclaimed independence from Imagawa.

Because of this, Imagawa's army which was defeated right in the middle of Owari and Mikawa and unable to retreat was dispersed away. Imagawa who has lost both the head of the family and her army, was destroyed by Takeda Shingen soon after.

Motoyasu always wears tanuki ears and tail accessories due to the belief that her family worship tanukis as a tradition, but from the looks of it, one can criticize that her characteristic can be totally seen just by her attire. Oh and by the way, she is also very near-sighted, and always wears spectacles imported from overseas. What a messed up princess daimyo.

Noon, at Aoshuu's grand hall sat Owari's master Oda Nobuna, Mikawa's Motoyasu Matsudaira, Maeda Inuchiyo and Sagara Yoshiharu. After defeating Imagawa Yoshimoto, Oda Nobuna seemed to be in a very good mood, and appeared stylishly with her yukata

half opened, her flask strapped at her waist and an Arquebus leaning against her shoulder.

After meeting with Saitou Dousan, it had been a long time since Sagara had seen her in her beautiful princess look, so he couldn't help but feel down. “Whatever looks No....Nobuna may have has no....nothing to do with it at all.” This kind of tsundere line Sagara can only bury deep in his heart.

Acting like she did not see anything, Nobuna pats Motoyasu on the shoulder and said “it's been quite some time, Takechiyo!” Motoyasu Matsudaira whose childhood name is "Takechiyo" has been buddies with Nobuna since they were children.

Nobuna, who is in a very good mood, greets Motoyasu while eating her specially made chicken wing.

Just to mention, Nobuna was once not satisfied with the size of her chicken wing, so she ordered a change to the chicken variety. Now the chicken wing in her hands is as big as that of a turkey. “Rather than calling it a chicken wing, I will call it a cow's hoof instead.” Sagara can't help but feel alarmed.

If Nobuna's advisor Niwa Nagahide were around, she would definitely say "Wear proper attire when signing a peace treaty. This kind of sloppy attire is too easygoing, 8 points."

“Yeah~Hehe~ It's been a while, Kichi-nee-san~”

While eating Uiroumochi smeothered with hatcho miso, Motoyasu smiles and lowers her head to Nobuna. But for some reason, her voice seems to be trembling a bit, and the squirrel accessories on top of her head are vibrating too. Sagara's eyes detected this kind of small movement from her.

"Inuchiyo, why is Motoyasu trembling like that?"

“…When the bespectacled Tanuki was imprisoned in Owari, she was bullied *cough* *cough* loved everyday by the young Nobuna-sama“

"Last time, whenever Nobuna-sama caught the bespectacled tanuki, she would say 'Nowhere to run, tanuki demon!! I will use you for teppanyaki!' and then she would tie the bespectacled tanuki on top of the tree

and raise a fire beneath her." While saying that, Inuchiyo's expression start to show a little bit of fear mix into it.

“So messed up, that would become a big issue if she did it in my world “

“Giving animal names to her beloved subordinates, this is the way Nobuna-sama shows her love.” Inuchiyo muttered.

“So in conclusion, after being captured by Oda, Motoyasu became Nobuna's lackey. What a miserable and pitiful childhood.”

“…Most likely her body still remembers the horror of that time. So, do not offend our master.”

Sagara pitied Motoyasu from the bottom of his heart.

“Takechiyo, let me introduce you to my trusted aide and my monkey. This cute little girl over there that looks like a puppy is Maeda Inuchiyo. The one who looks disgusting, has a perverted face, has no manners and is always full of himself is a monkey who calls himself [

Sagara Yoshiharu]. Though his brain seems to be banged up and he always thinks of himself as a human, don't be shy and call him Saru!”

“Really? I'm Matsudaira Motoyasu. Childhood name Takechiyo. Please take care of me.”

Just for an instant, Motoyasu's eyes seem to be flickering, like she had something to hide. Sagara did not really mind it, and lowers his head after saying hello.

After appearing in the sengoku era from modern Japan , Sagara was right in the middle of the battle between Oda and Imagawa's armies. During that time, he was almost beheaded by Motoyasu under Imagawa Yoshimoto's orders. But Sagara during that time was only a vagrant; after so long, Motoyasu seems to have forgotten about it. It might also have been that Motoyasu noticed this point, but as to not let the atmosphere become awkward, she might have pretended to forget about it.

After him, Inuchiyo lightly lowered her head too.

"…Maeda, Inuchiyo.”

“I still remember about Inuchiyo-san. Every time I was tied up by Kichi-nee-san and grilled, you were always the one who kicked me to the river and saved my life.”

Since you are saving her, why can't you use a more normal method? Sagara thinks.

"Due to Kichi-nee-san, Mikawa is finally independent. From here on, I would like to form an alliance with Owari, and have an everlasting friendship with Kichi-nee-san. ~Actually I was too afraid to say no~"

Even though it's independent now, Mikawa cannot change the fact that she is a small country. And the east side of Mikawa resides the now mighty Takeda Shingen forces. Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin, both of them can be called the strongest generals in sengoku era.

There wasn't anyone with guts and ability to challenge those strong knights of Takeda, other than the mighty Uesugi Kenshin. Obviously, to Takeda Shingen, Mikawa's Matsudaira Motoyasu is at most Imagawa's lackey. It's not a problem if they submit to the Takeda's, but there is absolutely no chance of an equal alliance. That's why from Motoyasu's point of view, other then forming an alliance with Nobuna there is no way to protect Mikawa's independence and safety.

Once considering Nobuna's ambition to conquer the world, after forming an alliance with Mikawa, she can

use it as a shield against Takeda. After conquering Mino, she can continue westward all the way to Kyo. But Mino is also not just any other province, that's why Nobuna has no more energy to guard against the east side.

And,

With Mikawa as an ally, the Owari people's favourite Hatcho Miso will also be very cheap and very easy to get. Since both of them are childhood friends, their relationship isn't too bad, plus both of them are now daimyos; their situations are actually quite similar.

Of course, in the end, both of them are still rulers of different states. There will definitely be places where they can't agree together.

“Takechiyo, it's ok for me to give you the whole of Mikawa. But can you give me the village of hatcho?”

“Ki....Kichi-nee-san, if we don't have hatcho miso, then Mikawa's specialty, Hatcho Miso will be gone. Mikawa's finance is relying on it now!”

“That's why you should just give it to me.”

“Exactly how can one come to such a conclusion? This brat Nobuna is so thick-skinned." Sagara whispers to Inuchiyo's ears.

“Ooooooonly this, only hatcho miso is not negotiable! If we don't have hatcho miso, my ministers will rebel!”

“...…Ok, I understand. But, for Owari's merchants to be able to buy cheap hatcho miso, from now onward there will be no hatcho miso tax between Owari and Mikawa, not one cent!”

Hatcho miso's tax is waived, from now on Owari can get even cheaper hatcho miso.

“Ok, if Kichi-nee-san can give up on hatcho village.”

This negotiation seems very hooligan-like, but as a result, Hatcho Miso will be cheaper!

Nobuna seems very satisfied about the end result. No matter what, the people of Owari's love for hatcho miso has almost reached a crazy level, you can see that from Katsuie. With this, the armies' ration expenses will also be reduced.

And hence....

Mikawa and Owari redrew their boundary lines, the east side will be given to Motoyasu and the west side to Nobuna, the alliance was formed immediately. While happily munching away on her huge chicken wing, she smiled and said “It's finally time.”

Nobuna's eyes glittered, and shouted proudly “Oi, didn't you hear what I said, idiotic monkey? You can leave the small stuff to Inuchiyo; right now we are to march towards Mino, and then towards Kyo! With this, I can finally take one step towards my ambition of world conquest.”

No matter how brightly you smile at me, I still feel that you aren’t cute at all! Sagara can't help but say it in his heart.

“Wait wait, there isn't any tanuki in the story of ' Momotaro banishing demons'. There should only be dog, monkey and pheasant shouldn't there?”

“Shut up, aren't pheasants and tanukis the same?”

Nobuna closed her small pink lips, and stared at Sagara.

"This kind of grumbly princess-sama is also cute." But Sagara rejected Inuchiyo's comment.

Sagara said before, Nobuna is someone with the self centered mindset *My stuff is mine, and my subordinate's stuff is also mine*.

"By the way, why are you as a minister always giving me this kind of attitude? Why are you always spoiling my mood?"

"You dare to even ask? Give me a justifiable reward. Who do you think is the main contributor towards the victory at Okehazama? Hurry and give me Owari's number one beauty!"

"Huh? The number one beauty is right in front of you. For what reason and duty must I introduce you to another family's daughter?"

"Shut up. Only that face of yours is OK! My criteria of a beauty are very strict. Looks alone can't do anything, someone with no inner beauty is just fail!"

"Ara, I don't just have a pretty face; when I strip its also quite spectacular. If you don't believe, why don't you just take a look yourself?"

Part of her beautiful chest was revealed a little bit for just an instant, though it's just a little bit.

Cough *Cough* *Cough* Sagara can't help but be alarmed at such a sudden movement.

Obviously she won't really take off her bra, and this time Nobuna points at Sagara and laughs uncontrollably. “Hahahahaha! You idiot, just a small joke and your face is all red! You can't really expect me to strip for you to see! Big idiot! So stupid that I'm thinking of beheading you! Ahahahaha!”

“Sh...Sh...Shut up! You are not little anymore! Stop these kinds of dangerous jokes. Don't you feel embarrassed?!”

“Sure, if my naked body is shown to others, of course I would be embarrassed. But what is so embarrassing about showing my body to a monkey? In the end it's another species.”

“Ah, is that so, then show it to me then! Take off your bra right now! And now that I think about it, why does someone in the sengoku era wear such a bra-like cloth? Isn't it strange?”

“Oioioioi, wait, what are you trying to do! You id...id... idiotic monkey, what's with your fingers!? Know your place!”

“Shut up!! If not for your instructions, Nene would not be around me 24 hours of the day keeping me from finding a girlfriend! You've made me desperate already!! ”

“Sto-Stop! What? Have you really turned into a monkey!?”

“Yeah, that's right! I'm a monkey! Because I've not been near girls for too long, I have turned into a monkey! " *Monkey noises*

“Ahhhh!? Inuchiyo!!”

“…Sagara, control yourself.”

Pinch

Not sure if it's too embarrassing, or because of the beautiful chest of Nobuna making him lose control, but

Sagara actually attacked his own master. But due to Inuchiyo's pinch to his cheeks, and Sagara's *OUCH!!!!!!!* , Sagara finally returned to his senses.

After returning to his senses, all Sagara could see is Nobuna boiling with anger kicking his head using all her strength.

“You....this.....idiotic.....monkey~!! I will definitely finish you off today, see if you still dare to offend your superiors!”

“Wait.....Wait! Don't raise your legs too high, I can see everything!”

“Ah~! Where are you looking at, you idiotic monkey, haven't you learned your lesson! You pervert, you eromaniac monkey!”

“Didn't I tell you to stop!?”

The alliance meeting was temporarily thrown aside, and the hall starts the play of the battle between the master and her servant. Motoyasu is totally being thrown aside.

“Er, you two, don't tell me it's like this all along?" She asked Inuchiyo timidly.

“.....…yes. Not even the gods can stop this quarrel, a specialty of Aoshuu.”

“Such a remarkable display of courage, Saru-kun. To offend Kichi-nee-san to that degree, and still have his head on.”

“…just playing only. Good relationship.”

“I can't belittle this man. ~Sagara Yoshiharu~”

Matsudaira Motoyasu deeply engraves Sagara Yoshiharu into her head.

Just when the alliance between these two childhood friends (actually, it's more of a master and her pet tanuki relationship) is going on smoothly, someone unexpected arrived at the gates of Aoshuu.

Asking who the hell he is, it's actually the gentleman who attracts all the girls with his stylish but disgusting

face. To Nobuna, this kind of uninvited guest is actually quite rare. The aides hastily run in and report the name of the guest.

“Invite him in immediately.”

Nobuna's big eyes glittered, and her heart hammered in excitement.

Her excitement is so great that Nobuna even forget about the other three people in the hall. Inuchiyo, Sagara and Motoyasu retreat to a corner to allow the new guest to come in.

After a while, this uninvited guest appears in the great hall.

In this sengoku world, Sagara's position can be considered quite high already, but this person before him is even higher. With long and smooth black hair, long eyelashes not losing to a girl, and snow white skin, this young warrior is handsome to a somewhat mysterious degree.

With a pretty face that makes people easily mistaken him for a real beauty, this handsome man even had Motoyasu and Inuchiyo, this pair of animals letting out " Oh oh" cheers.

But, Sagara can never forget how this man and his subordinates treated Nobuna with such an easy attitude.

"Who are you?"

The urge to ask uncontrollably blurt out.

"This is too rude of me. My name is Asai Nagamasa, and I traveled all the way from Odani Castle."

Using a soft tone, the black hair swordsman introduced himself gracefully.

"I wanted to have a meeting with Oda Nobuna-sama, and it is for this reason I anonymously come to Owari and visited Aoshuu. Please do forgive my intrusion."

With a dignified look and beautiful actions, no doubt he is a daimyo from Kinai. It is as if he wanted to portray himself as a handsome prince with his graceful gestures, not knowing why, Sagara felt a bit anxious.

“Damn....This kind of confident attitude. It's like he is showing his status to others purposely.”

“Gosh, be silent, monkey. Asai Nagamasa isn't a daimyo who just controls Kitaomi, he is also someone who I want to include in my alliance in the future."

“Oh, so that's it.... huh?”

Asai Nagamasa.

According to Sagara's sengoku game knowledge, Asai Nagamasa controls the region of kansai(The northen part of Omi), in other words, a big province. Sagara remembered that the reason Oda Nobunaga is able to advance towards Kyo after obtaining Mino is precisely because of the alliance with Asai Nagamasa. The need to do that is because Kansai is a region that Nobuna has to pass when advancing from Mino to Kyo.

But, Sagara, after using all his brain juice to remember (Asai Nagamasa, isn't he the one that Oda Nobunaga killed in the end?) starts to be more and more suspicious towards this gigolo swordsman who is smiling so confidently in front of him.

It's just a coincidence, but at the town's teashop, Nagamasa's opinion on Nobuna is like this

“Girls who think they can do anything in this sengoku era are pathetic; they are all mere chess pieces .”

The dignified gentlemen right in front of him was able to say such a thing; if not for Sagara listening to it on the spot, there is no way he could believe it.

Basically, this guy in front has other plans in his heart. Compared to Motoyasu who is like a tanuki but respects Nobuna from her heart, this guy is just using Nobuna as a stepping stone.

From this train of thought, it’s better not to let Nobuna have too many dealings with this guy. Sagara thinks to himself. Half of it was actually worrying for Nobuna, the other is because of some unknown anger at Nagamasa.

“Why are you in such a daze, idiotic monkey? Because of this, we can attack Mino peacefully now. At least show that you are happy a bit.”

“I see. Omi and Mino are countries linked together, you mean the final pheasant from the banish of Mino's demons has also appeared too?”

“Yes, that's what I mean.”

“Nobuna-sama, I'm not a pheasant.” Asai Nagamasa said lightly with a hint of sourness.

After that, while pressing his hand to his chest and with a gentle tone, he exclaims,

“My childhood name is Saruyashamaru. If Nobuna likes it, you can feel free to call me Saru(monkey)”

Sagara stood up in rage, and protested to Asai Nagamasa.

“Wait just a minute! Your character overlaps mine! I'm the monkey!”

Even though every time Nobuna called him Monkey he always argued back 'I'm a human!', once there is an impostor, Sagara is now emphasizing that he is the monkey.

“Such an interesting man. I did not use any Rosewood [4]. The perfume on my body today is sandalwood.”

"Ah, Nagamasa-sama, please do not mind this active monkey. If you follow in his steps, you will become stupid too."

"I understand."

"What does sandal wood have to do with anything? This bastard pisses me off." Sagara stare at him fiercely.

But Nagamasa just laughs, turn his head away from Sagara and did not care about him anymore.

"So, what brings you here today? Since you are here in Aoshuu personally, I guess it must be something important?"

"Exactly. Since currently, there is no more threat from Imagawa Yoshimoto, it is already pretty well known Nobuna is getting ready to attack your god-father Saitou Dousan's Gifu Castle."

"Of course."

"After that, you will be proceeding to the capital, I suppose?"

“Correct, after capturing Mino, I will go to the capital, and obtain the power to rule Japan. I have no wish to hide my ambitions now that I have come so far.”

Nagamasa laughs lightly.

Don't tell me this bastard even farts gracefully? Sagara is getting more and more pissed off, thinking how good it will be if I can kill him just through my stare.

“This man is currently releasing his charm towards Nobuna-sama." Inuchiyo muttered.

“Such a brave princess. Because of this, it must be fate that I who control Kitaomi should form an alliance with you.”

“Ara, I might just attack Omi instead, you know?”

“Not counting the Sasaki clan, we the Asai clan possess the fortress Odani castle, my father Hisamasa who has just given me the daimyo position is still alive, my ministers are united and my armies strong. If Nobuna-sama really decides to be our enemy, I'm afraid your plan of going to the capitol might be delayed. And, if I changed my mind and seek an alliance with Mino, Saitou Yoshitatsu, no one will know the odds of

Nobuna-sama obtaining Mino. As such, I think Nobuna-sama should accept this offer of alliance."

“Hehehe.” Nobuna smiled.

The smart Nobuna often likes people who are as smart as her, because that will get rid of lots of explaining time and effort.

“Like what you said, that's what I planned too. The Asai clan and the southern Sasaki clan has been at loggerheads for very long, and I remember you had been captured by the Sasaki clan while you were young before . As part of the alliance, I believe you will need my strength to defeat them?”

“Yes, absolutely correct. That's why I have visited Aoshuu personally.”

“Damn, why do the two of them seem to talk so happily? I don't know why, but it just pisses me off.” Sagara grumbles.

“I see. Nagamasa, you being here specifically, it seems like you are agree-able to this alliance too?”

"Actually my father, Hisamasa preferred to maintain good relationship with our old time allies, the Asakura clan. But, my father lacks the guts to face the Sasaki clan, the enemy who has snatched away Omi from us."

"Hmmm, Nagamasa-sama seems to have a bad father. "

"As the previous daimyo, Asai Hisamasa has always been the aide of the Sasaki clan. After being a hostage for years under the Sasaki clan and inheriting the daimyo title, they have relied on their own strength and broke away from the Sasaki clan and declared independence." Inuchiyo explained this to Sagara who did not know of the truth.

"And the current head is me, Saruyashamaru. As someone ambitious, it does not suit me to do nothing of value in my youth. Rather then currying favor with the old famous houses, I should fight along with ambitious heroes, that's what I think."

"So as to say, you are willing to lend me a hand in conquering the world? Just like Takechiyo over there?"

Nagamasa blinked and said “Petty lies won't work towards you, so I will just say it straight: I do not want to help with your ambitions.”

“Oh, so what do you mean?”

“Obtaining the world with you, that's my motive in coming here.”

“Isn't it the same?”

“No. What i'm saying is, we will aim for the world ' Together'. Nobuna-sama, please marry me!”

“Oh!!!!!”

Nobuna and Sagara almost immediately spit the tea in their mouths on each other. Even the color on the face of Nobuna shows that she is in confusion. Being proposed to, this is the first time in her life.

Meaning to stand up, but thinking if that's a bit too rude, Nobuna sat down quietly and put her hand into her yukata's sleeve, hiding her bra from sight.

“Ma...Ma...Ma...Ma...Ma...Marry you? So as to say, this is a proposal?”

“Yes, that's it. Let us become the representative of beautiful couple from Owari and Omi. Add that to both our ambition to conquer the world, I dare say there is no other more suitable couple then us in the world. “

“Su...Su...Su...Suddenly saying th...th...th...this type of thing, I...I...I will be troubled!”

Stealing a glance at Sagara's reaction who is letting out a howl of lament, Nobuna traces circles on the tatami mat . As for Inuchiyo and Motoyasu, there were whispers of “ ...This is bad...” “Gave me quite a scare”.

“So...So...So...So as to say, you are attracted by...by...by ...by me?”

“No, attraction is but a commoner's emotion. I'm the head of the Asai clan, and you are the head of the Oda clan. As both of us are carrying a huge responsibility, throwing away our personal feelings and getting into a political marriage is an obvious action.”

Soft but cold words. The ladies's man in front of his eyes are playing around with the feelings of girls, Sagara trembled with anger.

“I...I...I...I... Er... political marriage is not.....”

“This is such a surprising thing. I thought that Nobuna-sama will definitely understand, both of us are no longer kids.”

“I, will at least want to choose my own husband! I should decide it myself! I want to marry the guy I love! This is a dream I have had since I was young!”

“Oh, from your words, don't tell me you have someone you already fancy?”

To someone already in such a state of confusion, Nagamasa seems to be used to this kind of situation, his tone is still calm and confident.

“Such as, other then me, is it the other monkey over there?”

Nobuna became red from head to toe, her face can almost be used to boil water.

“No....No such thing! This...This...This idiot is just my subordinate! A head of a family marrying just a lowly foot soldier is impossible! This...This...This kind of idiot, I'm totally, definitely, 100% don't feel anything from the bottom of my heart!!”

Sagara is walking around in circles on the tatami mat for no reason, was suddenly kicked in the face by Nobuna.

“It's hurts! What the hell are you doing!?” Sagara is angry too.

'Actually I don't love you at all.' Suddenly being proposed by a guy who says something like this, Nobuna is so embarrassed that she is now confused. Sagara can't withstand such a thing anymore.

“Being proposed to by such a suave guy and yet acting like this, you are exposing the normal you now!”

“You...You...You... Don't just stand there not saying anything! This is a big matter regarding your master's chastity!”

“Ya right! This is not a matter that a foot soldier like me has any right to say anything about!”

“What? You should at least object! You are actually anxious right!? Or you intend to run away because he has such a handsome face? Don't tell me you are that kind of cowardly, chicken-hearted wimp?”

“Hu...Huh? What are you saying!? Me, Sagara Yoshiharu-sama, do something like that? And what proof do you have that I'm running away?"

“That...That is to say, the number 1 beauty in your dreams that you beg to have is going to be snatched away by this Asai Nagamasa, can you bear to be silent!?”

The hot weather seems to just heat up their argument, as both of them totally ignored Nagamasa who is looking at them like a show, with their argument becoming more and more heated.

“Wait just a minute there! You say who is the number 1 beauty?”

“That's me of course! No one else but me!”

“Huh? I'm just a lowly foot soldier, and a monkey. Don't you totally, definitely, 100% not feel anything from the bottom of your heart? Don't you label yourself as the Number 1 beauty in the world? If so, just find a gigolo who is matching in status and marry him; isn't that for the better?”

“Wh...What? Not cute at all! Why can't you just cry and shout 'Nobuna-sama is marrying some other guy! No, I don't want something like this! No! No! No!'”

“What the hell is that!? Who would do such a stupid thing!?”

“Do it! Do it now! Shut up and beg me while crying ' Only this, please don't do it!' Or else I will really marry Nagamasa!”

“Ya right! Non...Non...None of my business! Being charmed and attracted by such a guy who already declared that he isn't marrying you for love can only mean that you are a dumb woman, isn't that right!?”

“Po...Po...Po...Political marriages are a common thing in this sengoku era! I'm a head of a country after all! I'm not someone who can just choose anyone I like and marry!”

“Ahh, this sucks. I can't bear this anymore. Look at you! What you are doing now, is this the Oda Nobuna who is trying to conquer the world?”

There will definitely be a day where Asai Nagamasa will break the alliance and betray the Oda clan.

But, Sagara cannot tell Nobuna the 'future' from his knowledge of his games, that's the agreement between them. Because of this, Sagara is conflicted. If I just say ' Don't marry Nagamasa!' without a reason, Nobuna will definitely think that I'm jealous over her without thinking of my position, thus adding to her arrogance and pride.

In actual fact, Sagara is already very jealous over this matter, but he himself just doesn't want to admit it! This, and Nobuna is his master, while he himself is her retainer at most.

“Argh... I got it! It's definitely that! You must not have understood the real reason why I gave Nene to you as a sister!”

“I understood it loud and clear! You just want to keep me away from any girls and have me live a life of torture right!? You are such a woman! No, a demon wearing the skin of a woman!"

“.....Th...Th...That's it! You...You...You are quite clear, aren't you!?”

“Hmmm!”

“Hmmm!”

And then both of them turn their back towards each other and fumed.

Such a never seen before drama in front of the gentleman of Omi, Asai Nagamasa. Inuchiyo is helpless.

“.....becoming like this, it won't end until there is a result. We will definitely give you a reply.”

Nagamasa replied readily “Proposing to the princess at her age suddenly, I might be a bit too hasty too. I believe that time for considering is needed, I hope there will be a good reply.”

“.....Understood.”

“Oh yes, Inu-dono. Though it's a bit rude, I would like to despatch soldiers to Mino to help out too. If it's for the future of my beloved wife, Omi will always despatch aid to Owari.”

A beautiful face not losing to a girl, a sudden proposal, and 'A political marriage abandoning love', those kind of brave words, all of them totally confuses Nobuna the brat who knows nothing about love yet.

Bringing a smile that seems to have everything in control, Asai Nagamasa left Aoshuu castle.

After Nobuna beat Sagara up completely, she then found out that Nagamasa has already left. Noticing this and shouting “Idiot monkey, this is your fault! If matters get worse, what will we do!?”, she left to her room while fuming. Inuchiyo followed hastily.

…...

Motoyasu, who was abandoned in the hall, poked her finger at the unmoving corpse of Sagara.

“Saruharu-kun, Saruharu-kun? Are you still alive?”

The half dead Sagara struggled back to the sitting positon, while twisting his almost broken neck.

“.....Almost... I think.”

“Good job. Because of your performance with Kichi-nee-san, this matter was muddled through beautifully.”

“Muddled through? Such a rare love lecture is spoiled into a fight.....”

Motoyasu's lips turned into a proud smile like a Tanuki.

“Kichi-nee-san will form an alliance with the Asai clan one day because of her proceeding to the capital. But if we form the alliance now, it's obvious that the stronger Asai clan will be more advantagous. The Asai clan specifically ran over to the Oda clan to ask for an alliance

. However, to Kichi-nee-san this alliance is necessary to go to the capital."

"Ah, that's why Nagamasa proposed to Nobuna with such an arrogant tone? Because he knows that Nobuna can not reject him?"

"If she marries now, Kichi-nee-san will forever be below Nagamasa. But if we conquered Mino, in terms of provincial strength, Kichi-nee-san will have the definite lead. If that happens, Nobuna no longer has to marry Nagamasa no matter what; even without marriage, the forming of an alliance is still possible."

"I see."

"That's why, to not let Nagamasa help us conquer Mino, Kichi-nee-san is desperately finding ways to delay her reply to Nagamasa."

So that's why she suddenly attacked me. Sagara thought.

"If that's the case, why can't she hint me subtly?"

"Well, she was honestly angry around in the middle."

“Are we enemies in the past life? Why does she became so angry when she looks at my face?”

Motoyasu nods her head a little.

"As a childhood friend I can still understand a bit, but I can't tell Saruharu-kun.”

“Why?”

“Because it's a secret. It might even be my trump card at the right moment. Hehehe.”

This small brat is really a bad hearted Tanuki Sagara thought to himself.

After saying farewell to Motoyasu, Sagara ran as fast as he could to the city, passing by the streets of Aoshuu and finally met Asai Nagamasa's party.

“I should at least scold this disgusting bastard Nagamasa for saying a bunch of crap to Nobuna so confidently.”

“Oi, you! Stop right now!”

“Master, should we kill him?“ Nagamasa's men showed their killing intent.

“Another monkey? What do you have to say to this Saruyashamaru?”

“...Eh.....! Oi, Nobuna might be like that, but she is a pure girl who believes in love! Yet you bastard still talked about a political marriage without love, troubling Nobuna!”

“Hahaha, you run all the way here to complain just because of jealousy? You are just a retainer, so no matter how much you love her, you two are impossible.”

“Nonono, it's not like that! At least..... At least tell her that you like her! What you are doing is quite cruel!”

“I think that if I lie to her like that, it will be even more cruel to her. From the first day she became a sengoku daimyo, she should have given up her right to choose her partner.”

“What did you say!?”

“Nobuna-sama should have said it too, this is common in the sengoku era, Saru-kun. As a daimyo, she should

always put the clan's interests first. To be troubled with choosing her husband is the behavior of a lowly servant. Plus, her ambition is to conquer the world; Nobuna should not be thinking of her own happiness as a woman .”

“This kind of thing... How can this kind of thing....”

“Hahahaha, you are such a kid. Love at first sight, that is the right of a commoner who merely needs to carry the responsibility of her home. As someone who carries the responsibility of an entire clan, Nobuna should have already given up on such a thing like the happiness of a woman. That is this common sense in this world.” Nagamasa overlooked Sagara on horseback, while coldly saying this.

“As the saying goes, one must make the painful decision when it's time. Nobuna-sama is smart, she should have already thought through this and decided. In her heart, there is no other conclusion but for her to agree.”

“That is to say, even if you guys do that elaborate act in front of me, it is at best a delaying technique. You, a lowly general, can't do anything. So just treasure the time

you have now and cheer your princess up as the monkey you are.”

“You...You...! You ev...even saw through that, yet still say things like 'Political marriage without love'.....You... You, don't you have your own feelings!?”

“I should just say it straight out, rather then letting her have her ambitions of conquering the world while she can't even abandon her dream of choosing her husband, I will allow her to give up that small dream as soon as possible. What I'm doing is for her own good. I do not plan to, nor am I willing to do such a meaningless thing like lying to her.”

“You...You just shut up! I have sworn that I will make every one of Nobuna's dreams come true. If she said she can't give up on the world or love, I will help her get both of them if it's the last thing to do! If, only if you can promise to fall in love with Nobuna.....”

“Sorry, I feel no feelings of love to Nobuna-sama at all, and there will be none in the future either. My heart is already possessed with my ambition, that's why I still have a bit of virtue and am not trying to bring Nobuna-sama to my side by any means necessary. In the

future, I will use this princess to help me conquer the world.”

“.....You...You bastard.....!”

Not caring about anything and pouncing on Nagamasa, Sagara was brought to the floor by Nagamasa's men and beaten up badly.

“Just like a kid.”

Looking at the currently beaten up Sagara, Nagamasa eyes became serious.

“You don't really think that you can be together with that princess?”

“That...That kind of thing, I wasn't thinking about it at all! What I... I wanna say is.....”

“I have heard of a vagrant named Sagara Yoshiharu in Owari, such a guy like you can never marry the Oda princess. If it really happens, you will be attacked by numerous ministers and people. Nobuna-sama will be branded with the title of 'The real dimwit' and subsequently abandoned. At that time, Nobuna-sama will be utterly ruined.”

Nagamasa's words, though heartless, are the undeniable truth.

But, even if that's the case, it's still unforgivable.

You can never match up to her. Silently admitting to this gives Sagara an indescribable pain. This matter, Sagara can never accept it willingly no matter what.

Nighttime came, and Sagara returned to the Five leaf aralia houses all tired, but first, he went into his neighbor Inuchiyo's house to listen to Nobuna's situation.

But...

“.....Hai....”

Inuchiyo gave a small sign.

“Inuchiyo, what is troubling you? Don't tell me you are thinking of Uiroumochi?”

“.....Was imitating the princess-sama just now.”

“That didn't look like it one bit.”

“.....(Anger)”

Inuchiyo raised a hand and tried to pinch Sagara's face , but Sagara dodged reflexively and rolled to the room's safe corner.

Inuchiyo has also given up on chasing, and concentrated on cooking her Five leaf aralia soup.

“.....Princess-sama said nothing about her own love. So as to what she really thinks, Inuchiyo does not know.”

“You've been following Nobuna around for so many years; can't you make a guess?”

“.....About this, I can't say anything to Sagara. That's what princess-sama ordered.”

“What!? She plans to ignore me? Not cute at all.”

Guru~guru~guru~guru[5]

Angered, Sagara started to roll around the tatami mat in Inuchiyo's house.

At this time, an old man walked over the threshold into the house. Looking at the state Sagara was in, he put his foot onto Sagara's stomach.

"Oh!? That hurts, you old geezer!"

"Hohohoho. A man making such a fuss in here, that is not like what you should be doing, brat."

This old man who has retired here after joining Nobuna's side, is the once Mino's head, viper Saitou Dousan.

"Little girl, I will be disturbing you for a while."

".....No problem."

After crossing swords with his god-son, Saitou Yoshitatsu and losing Mino to him, Saitou Dousan had been deported to Owari. Now, after passing his dream of conquering the world to his god-daughter Nobuna, Dousan no longer looks into political matters, and lives his life drinking tea.

After all, Mino's viper is someone who the Oda clan has fought for many years, just his presence will make one uncomfortable. That's why facing the Oda's retainers who are still evaluating him, Dousan can only act cautiously.

The Dousan in front of him coming all the way to the Five leaf aralia houses is the first though.

“Coming here specifically, you must have some purpose, geezer.”

Sagara sat up straight facing Dousan.

Inuchiyo served tea wordlessly, while Dousan received it silently too.

“Not at all, not at all, I have already chosen retirement. What I want to say today is nothing of great importance to the Oda clan."

“So you're just here to chat? Because of that bastard Asai Nagamasa, my whole body is now bruised and hurts all over, why not tomorrow?”

“Hohohoho. The news of Omi's Asai Nagamasa proposing to Nobuna-sama has already spread through Aoshuu city."

“That's a bit too fast.”

"It's probably Nagamasa who spread it. He is saying he hopes this marriage between Omi and Owari proceeds smoothly and as fast as possible. He seems to be trying to make this marriage a fact even before Nobuna-sama gives her reply."

".....Damn, that's too underhanded. As expected from someone who knows how to play with feelings."

"And," Dousan said.

"Anything else, geezer?"

"Always looking forward, you who are always running around for Nobuna-sama, I can't really agree with your actions today."

"Me? What's wrong with me?"

"Nobuna-sama is facing one of the biggest decisions in her lifetime, yet you chose to hide in Inuchiyo-dono's room and sulk while lying down. This is not the Sagara Yoshiharu I know."

Sagara, troubled, lowered his head.

Even so, there are no lies within Nagamasa's cold words. I'm just making a fuss like a kid' Sagara grumbled silently in his heart.

".....Yes, you're right, geezer. But who Nobuna wants'ta marry is up to her, right? As her lowest retainer, I have no right to say anything, since the difference in our positions is just too big."

Saitou Dousan's expression became serious suddenly, staring at Sagara while scolding "You... big fool!!!"

Sagara's body is pushed back by the pressure formed by Dousan's words.

"Wa, that almost scared me to death!"

"Brat! You are just running away!"

"Why...Why does everyone say I'm running away!?"

"What is it about the lowest position among the retainers? What is it about no right to say anything? What is it about too great a difference in position? If that's so, all you have to do is to climb up! Isn't it all right if you become someone great!?" Dousan patted Sagara's shoulders with the fan in his hands.

“I was but a merchant selling oil, but now I'm a daimyo too! No matter what Nagamasa might plan to do, just remember, this is not the era of considering positions ! Listen brat! For humans, there is no such thing as ' positions'.”

“So, instead of lamenting your lowly position, why don't you think of increasing your strength!” Dousan restated it again.

“Becoming...someone great....?”

“Yes. Sagara Yoshiharu, you came from the future Japan because you want to let Nobuna-sama rely on you, no?”

“.....Ah. I still don't know the reason I came over to the sengoku era, but I have thought about it. I might have come here from my era so I can be by the side of the genius, who is misunderstood by the world.”

“If so, at the coming battle of Mino, make an achievement that no one else can! Make yourself into a retainer that no one can replace; contribute to the Oda clan like nobody can. If you do so, Nobuna-sama will definitely use you, and you will become an Oda general."

(If so, I might just be able to.....)

“General, you mean to say having your own retainers, and having a province on my own under Nobuna's command? You mean I should become someone like that, geezer?”

“Yes. At that time, you don't need to be so timid. You can just say out loud that you object to the marriage with Asai Nagamasa.”

“But.....”

“Listen, brat. As you have seen, Asai Nagamasa is a handsome man who has attracted many girls, but he has sealed his heart due to him being a hostage in the Sasaki clan, and has decided to never love any girl. He has used the Sasaki clan's retainers' wives and daughers an uncountable number of times, and thrown them away.

“.....What!?”

“Because of this, Nagamasa allowed the Asai clan to obtain independence from the Sasaki clan. As a sengoku daimyo, he is someone to be feared. But as a man, that is also his fatal weakness.

Dong...Dong...Dong...Dong...

Sagara's heart seem to pound nosily, as if being affected by something.

“As expected, what I heard this morning in the teashop are all Nagamasa's real intentions.”

“That is to say, from now on, Nagamasa will never develop any trace of love for Nobuna-sama.”

Sagara's heart feels like it's being shattered into pieces.

Dousan continued to say: “Political marriages are the common sense in this sengoku era. Towards the princess daimyo Nobuna-sama, a marriage can even mean a trump card to expanding her power. To chase after the dream of conquering the world, she has no choice but to abandon her dream as a girl. This is an obvious decision. ”

But...

“For the dream of conquering the world, she plans to abandon another irreplaceable dream. If she does, that

child's later life will be filled with memories of loneliness and solitude. Even if in the end she obtains the world, do you really think it's all right like that?”

Biting his lips, Sagara's eyes hardened.

He spoke as though talking to himself.....

".....There is no helping it. This is the rule in the sengoku era, wanting to get both the world and love is not possible, Nagamasa also said that...."

Sagara understands this more then any others, he doesn't mean to say this kind of thing.

His own voice, due to his strong unwillingness, started to tremble and choked.

“Brat, that's all I have to say tonight. After this, it's your decision.”

Dousan finished and walked slowly out of Inuchiyo's house.

After Dousan left, Sagara remained in his seiza position like a statue, not moving at all.

“.....Sagara, Five leaf aralia soup is done.”

With a face full of worry, Inuchiyo pulled lightly on Sagara's sleeve.

“Hey, Inuchiyo.”

“.....Today's soup, I added some overseas chili. It's delicious, ask Nene over too.”

“Nobuna and Nagamasa's marriage, what is your opinion on that?”

“.....Of course, I Object.”

“Yeah. Can you persuade Nobuna, tell her 'I object' and stop this marriage?”

Inuchiyo shake her head lightly.

“.....Impossible.”

“Eh? Why? How about Katsuie or Nagahide?”

“.....If it's not Sagara, it most probably will fail.”

“Why?”

“.....The one retainer who really understands princess-sama's dreams, is you.”

Inuchiyo looks at Sagara's eyes, and said lightly.

Unifying the world, growing Japan to a country where they are as strong as the European countries, creating such a strong country. And then, travelling around the sea using a big ship, using her own eyes to look at the “ world” she had never seen before.

These are Nobuna's dreams.

And...

And, Nobuna has another, a small dream.

Nobuna once told Nagamasa directly, didn't she?

“I will at least want to choose my own husband!”

Though she is a princess daimyo, this speech could come from a kid; not speaking with common sense at all, it might even be something that people ignore. But, undeniably, this is what her real self let slip under her confusion.

This is what Nobuna has buried deep inside her heart, a hypocritical yet pure dream.

Because of this, that's why Sagara can never accept Nagamasa's “For the world, abandon love”. By not caring about Nobuna's real intentions and proposing a political marriage, Nagamasa will only chaining Nobuna down forever.

Sagara can never forgive this sort of thing.

"I understand, Inuchiyo.”

I am definitely here to help make her wishes come true ; that's why I came to this world.

This might not be the truth at all, but that's what I think.

To Nobuna, I had sworn an oath too.

I forgot what I should do just because of my own lowly position. But due to Dousan that geezer and Inuchiyo, I finally remembered.

“Thanks, Inuchiyo!”

Sagara held Inuchiyo's hands tightly, his eyes glittered with joy.

“I have decided, I will make an outstanding achievement during the battle with Mino! And then, I will become a worthy Oda general, letting the Oda family become strong, and stop this marriage between Nobuna and Nagamasa. To match up with her who has set her eyes on the 'world', that guy must at least be better.”

“.....Inuchiyo, will help out.”

“If that's the case, I can stop them rightfully! Nagamasa, just you wait. I will destroy this plan of yours ! I'm going to Aoshuu city to spread rumors that you are a womanizer! You just wait and see, Nagamasa! He... Hehe...Hehehehehe.....!”

Pinch~Inuchiyo pinched Sagara's cheeks.

“.....Sagara, you laugh perversely. First, Mino.”

“I know, I know!”

Sagara rubbed his cheeks, but suddenly he tilted his head.

Hmmm?

Why, after deciding that I should stop Nobuna's marriage, does my heart feel so at ease?

(I know, it must be because I can let that Nobuna who feels that she is popular suffer a shock when the marriage is destroyed, yes, it can't be wrong! That idiot, how dare she send Nene to me to disrupt me from flirting, now is the time for payback! As long as I can't find a girlfriend, she will be single with me too! What goes around comes around! Let's wait and see!)

Being convinced by this kind of stupid reason, Sagara let out a sinister “hehehe” laughter, while Inuchiyo at the side thinks “Sometimes troubled, sometimes fussy, sometimes laughing, sometimes wearing a sinister face; Sagara is strange today” and looked at Sagara.

Chapter 2: Takenaka Hanbei Enters The Fray!

After being proposed to by Asai Nagamasa, Nobuna's decision for this marriage was “Attacking Mino is what's important, so we will shelve this matter for now.”

It's still uncertain if she will marry Nagamasa, but this reply will at least ensure that Omi will not disturb Owari while Nobuna is attacking Mino. Though this reply seems politically motivated, from what one can see from Nobuna, she does not seem to care about the marriage at all.

No matter what, this being the first marriage proposal in her lifetime, Nobuna is sure to be confused and will not know what to do. But after looking at Sagara, who had secretly decided to say nothing about this matter until after he had achieved great feats during the attack of Mino, Nobuna could not bear it.

“Though both are of the same species, why does our monkey differ so much from Omi's Saruyashamaru? Ahhh, I think I should get married after all.”

Such rants and complaints could be often heard.

"Yeah. Marriage or elopement, do whatever you like! If you have what it takes, just try it!"

Sagara readily accepted the rants.

After listening to this, one could only expect Nobuna's anger to explode again. Niwa Nagahide, Shibata Katsuie, and the other retainers were helpless towards this matter.

Now in the grand hall of Aoshuu, Nobuna and her retainers were gathered together. Everyone already knew of the agenda for this meeting.

"The start of the battle of Mino!" This is the only topic, and the retainers who were present are.....

"The start to conquering the world has finally come! My hands have already started to itch with anticipation." The number 1 retainer, bold and decisive. From Sagara's estimation, this Shibata Katsuie had the capacity of a G-cup! Her childhood name is "Riku".

Her childhood name should be "Gonroku", but because of her history of changing from small boobs to giant boobs, she complained that the name "Gonroku" was not cute at all. The strength of someone who finally

changed her name to “Riku” is not shown just on her chest, but also on her unparalleled spear skills.

Ever since following under Nobuna's brother, Nobukatsu, she had always hoped to be a retainer of Nobuna. Now that this wish was fulfilled, she was even more active and full of motivation. Incidentally, Katsuie's favorite food was miso udon. As long as it's smothered with miso, she would not reject it, no matter if it's shaved ice or Uiroumochi.

“Inabayama castle was designed by Saitou Dousan himself. It's hard to attack but easy to defend. 33 points,” said Niwa Nagahide, Nobuna's young retainer. It's as if she was Nobuna's sister, a mature and gentle beauty. The smile on her face was almost her trademark, and her character was seldom manipulated by her own desires.

Though she's a bit naggy, she was an irreplaceable existence in the Oda clan. That's why the retainers called her “Kome-gorozae”. It meant her talent was as necessary as rice. But compared to “Gorozae”, Nobuna likes to call her using her childhood name “Manchiyo”. For some reason, she had the weird habit of giving points to anything. She did not have any favorite food, nor did she detest any particular food.

"Hahahahahaha! Just leave it to me, Kanjuurou Nobukatsu!"

Oda Nobukatsu, also known as Kanjuurou. As the brother of the self proclaimed "Number one beauty in Owari" Nobuna, he was a guy with very similar looks to his sister. His hobby was to play around with his fanclub of girls all day long.

His special trait was cross-dressing. If he dressed himself as a courtesan, he would be even more charming than normal girls. He was once rebellious towards Nobuna, but he was trying his best to help his sister right now. Though his skills of playing around can be considered professional, his talent as a general was nonexistent. As of now, he was being tortured to death by Katsuie under the name of training to becoming a warrior.

Because of this, his body was never seen without new injuries. His favorite food seems to be Uiroumochi, as he was always fed that by Nobuna when he was still small. He even has the ambition to promote Uiroumochi everywhere if he can achieve much in his conquest as a general.

"------Maeda Inuchiyo, always by the princess side."

Current aide, Maeda Toshii, childhood name Inuchiyo. A sister character to Nobuna, though quiet, she can be adamant in getting things done. Her body size is delicate, but she always uses a bamboo spear. She was once banished from Owari for striking down Nobukatsu, she rejoined Nobuna during the battle of Okehazama wearing a tiger hat.

The sudden change of the plain girl to one with attention seeking accessories gave quite a shock to the Oda clan's retainers. What could have happened during that period when she was gone?

From what Inuchiyo said, she seemed to have "lost herself during a trip to find herself". Seems like she changed herself to a beast while being in the harsh environments of the wild, or that is what Nagahide evaluates.

And there's one more thing that was known to everyone. Inuchiyo was Sagara's neighbor in the Five-Leaf Aralia Houses. For Sagara who had just

traveled from modern Japan to the Sengoku era which he knew nothing about, Inuchiyo tried her best to take care of him.

To Sagara, Inuchiyo was a very reliable comrade, but it would be even better if her chest was bigger (Real words from Sagara). As for her favorite food, it was definitely Nobuna's frequent reward to her, Uiroumochi.

“I'll definitely achieve great feats to destroy that bastard Nagamasa's marriage plans.”

The idiot who said this kind of tactless stuff with blazing eyes was our protagonist Sagara Yoshiharu, also known as Saru.

Job: An ordinary high school student in modern Japan, but was thrown into this Sengoku era for reasons unknown. If this kind of stuff happened to others, they might panic or be depressed, but Sagara was an idiot with guts, not to mention a game fanatic of Sengoku era games. With his thinking of “I came from the future! Heaven must have sent me here to help Nobuna out!”, he was full of confidence.

As a substitute to Toyotomi Hideyoshi who saved his life in the battlefield, he believes it is his duty to help

Nobuna conquer the world with the help of his Sengoku era games knowledge. His dream of “I want to play around with the world's number one beauty!” is as expected.

Though he does not necessarily dislike the heavy flavour of Owari, a life with every meal full of miso gave him quite a headache. As of now, he aims to use his own talent to achieve many great feats in the battle of Mino, and reject Nobuna's marriage to Nagamasa.

He himself had found a bunch of reasons and excuses, but from what others could see he was just someone who had forgotten his place and was envious of Nagamasa.

“This Inabayama castle that I built myself is not something that you guys can conquer that easily.”

This old man who was seeking refuge in Owari was the Daimyo of Mino, Nobuna's godfather, “Saitou Dousan”, aka “Viper”. He was once an oil merchant in the capital, but conquered Mino and became a sengoku Daimyo. Becoming a master of a province had taken most of his life away, however. After giving his ambition to the foolish princess of Owari, Oda Nobuna, he was betrayed by his son who was indignant about his

decision to give Mino to Nobuna, and almost died in the battlefield.

The one who saved Dousan, whose life was supposed to be up, was Sagara Yoshiharu. Originally, Sagara thought that with Dousan here, Mino would be ours, but the important Dousan revealed a very troubled face and kept opening and closing the paper fan in his hand.

Dousan had been showing signs of old age ever since coming to Owari. His body's condition has been worsening, it was definitely not good to force it. But though his body no longer matched his name of “Viper”, he displayed an image of a grandfather who loves and dotes on his own daughter, Nobuna. He will most likely be defending Aoshuu castle in this battle, Nagahide thinks.

“Japan's strongest cavalry army, 'The Tiger of Kai', Takeda Shingen, invaded surprisingly quickly. Now is not the time to dilly dally.” And last, we have the master of the Oda clan who was controlling Owari, Oda Nobuna , whose childhood name is “Kichi”.

Though she often wears a very bizarre and strange outfit, when she wears her formal attire, it would shock

anyone; saying she was Owari's number 1 bishoujo was very fitting for her. After defeating Imagawa Yoshimoto at Okehazama, Oda Nobuna's name had rung out through the whole country and she became the most striking sengoku Daimyo.

After Nobuna's father, Oda Nobuhide, died, she succeeded the head of the Oda clan with the title of " Owari's foolish princess", and had been pushing forward with her ambition of conquering the world. As a fan of overseas stuff, she had been treating the globe she obtained from a Christian missionary as a treasure and the arquebus in her hand never left her side.

If she was able to pacify the Sengoku battles, she would develop Japan to be a country that could stand up to those foreign countries, and begin her adventure to tour the world. Nobuna was the only one who had this kind of dream, one that could never be understood by anyone other than the modern student Sagara.

Her favorite food was her braised chicken wings. But after being proposed by Omi's Asai Nagamasa, she began showing a troubled face even when eating her

chicken wings. Whenever her rival Sagara was around, she would bring up the topic of marriage to antagonize him.

"She must be hoping that Sagara will stop this marriage", Nagahide comments.

But Sagara seemed not to care as a result of his pride, as he had already made up his mind *Before achieving anything, he will not say a word about the marriage*. And after looking at such a non-caring Sagara, Nobuna started getting angrier while thinking *Why is this damn monkey still acting like this? Don't tell me he thinks that it's not his business whether I marry or not?* Anyone could see that her mood was getting worse by the day.

Just like that, the important generals of the Oda clan had now assembled (Though Sagara was still at the back seat), waiting for their master to give the order to invade Mino. While eating her jumbo braised drumstick and using her legs to spread the map of Mino, she announced to her aides "Time to conquer Mino!"

"Justice is with us, the Oda clan! In our hands we have the 'Mino treaty' signed personally by Viper, and we have the duty to return my godfather, Saitou Dousan, to

Inabayama castle. Saitou Yoshitatsu is just an unfilial son who banished his own father."

"But Mino has officially recognized Saitou Yoshitatsu as the head. Now that they are united, it seems like things won't go easily. 20 points," Nagahide said.

While sipping his tea, Dousan said with a voice full of weariness, "Mino was originally stolen by me. Although Yoshitatsu was brought up by me, he is the rightful heir of Mino. From the eyes of the Mino people, I'm in the wrong. You can't break through their defensive lines that easily."

This is the heart of the trouble; Saitou Yoshitatsu is the heir of the owner of Mino who Dousan banished. When he conquered Mino, to appease the people, Dousan appointed the heir Yoshitatsu as his own heir. But this cunning plan was given up along with his plan of "I should give this Mino to the cute Nobuna-chan." Being banished by Yoshitatsu is actually nothing strange at all... ..

"Yoshitatsu and I go back a long way. He is totally different from me when I was young; he has no sense of beauty. With his short height and plump physique, he

looks just like a sumo wrestler. The old me loved beautiful people! I definitely won't give the position of Mino's master to anyone but Nobuna-chan!”

“Geezer, that you still have the nerve to say that.....If you had maintained a good relationship with Saitou Yoshitatsu, the situation now wouldn't be this troublesome,” Sagara said silently with his face showing nothing at all.

“Viper, height is not important, but it's due to Saitou Yoshitatsu that Mino is now united and well taken care of.”

“That is because during my reign, I put across many controversial policies and my popularity had hit rock bottom. If you stop these policies to appease the people who are against them, anyone will say that you are a wise ruler, Nobuna-dono.”

“***Oh, controversial policies. Didn't Nobuna-sama conduct a similar experiment of planning to create/ restore new towns in Kiyoshou?”

"Yeah, the Rakuichi-Rakuza policy. In fact, this policy was inspired by you, Viper. However, it was not as successful as planned."

“Yes. I had abolished the old trading privileges of “Za[6]”, wanting to build a free trade environment for the people. I was a trader, so I easily recognized that commerce is the foundation of a country’s development and the prosperity of the people."

"But after the abolition of the [Za], the taxes and exchange rates would be severely reduced, causing those who used these methods to gain wealth to slowly lose their source of income..."***

“Yes. With this, the people who embezzle money from these “Za” can’t do that anymore, and that is why they are so angry at me.”

“That’s why once Yoshitatsu started his reign over Mino, “Za” was re-introduced to gain the support of the people. Because of this, the economy that was starting to pick up has declined again, slowly turning lively cities into ghost towns,” Dousan said severely. It seems like he was deeply angered by his successor’s uselessness.

No matter the era, a revolution in policies will always create troubles and opposition. Actually, if one wants to

unify this country that is torn apart by different warring states, protecting the trading economy and allowing the people to trade freely is a necessary measure! And one can't just eliminate those embezzling bastards called " seats", one should even waive off any trading tax between provinces.

"Ke-chak!"

"Viper, the way your back is bending, are you alright? "

"…..Owwwwww! It seems like I'm a bit……too excited. My back…."

"Anyways, Dousan-dono, Inabayama castle and the cities below it were all designed by you, right? You should have considered ways to attack it," Katsuie asked optimistically.

"Can you reveal a bit? Though Inabayama castle looks easy to defend but hard to attack, it should have some weakness, right?"

"About that, Katsuie-dono, I'm afraid not... The Inabayama castle..."

“In...Inabayama castle?”

“The Inabayama castle of now can’t be invaded. Even with my strategies, we can't do anything to the castle. It would be difficult even for the 'Tiger of Kai' Takeda Shingen, or the 'god of war' Uesugi Kenshin.”

“Wh…What?!”

“Viper, is that true?”

“This is quite troublesome. 12 points...No, 3 points.”

“.....Sagara, how...?”

“Inuchiyo, act more panicky for starters!”

“.....Wa~WA~”

The room was full of chaos all of a sudden. Originally, everyone thought that since Dousan is here conquering Mino would be easy, but it seems like they had underestimated the feat of conquering Mino. Inabayama castle was designed and built by Saitou Dousan personally.

Relying on just Mount Kinka as a natural shield, and deploying various guard posts to guard against the invading Owari army, the main guard post on the mountaintop was 330 feet high. In addition, the north face of the mountain had the Nagara river and the Sakai river separating Owari and Mino, forming a natural wall around the castle, protecting it from other invading countries.

Also, the towns and villages at the foot of the mountain could be changed to defending bases at any sign of an approaching invasion. It could be said to be the deliberate and cunning plan of the Viper. Oda clan's previous head, Nobuna's father, Oda Nobuhide, had led multiple invasions of Inabayama castle, but due to Saitou Dousan's devious and cunning plans and the natural defenses of the castle, he had always returned empty handed. Thinking about the disastrous defeats now, the Oda clan's aides still talked about it. The reason why the aides believed that they can conquer Mino this time was because the enemy, Dousan, was now Nobuna's godfather and had become their ally, allowing them to see a shred of hope.

"Try thinking about this, Katsuie-dono, if I really did have a plan to conquer that castle, would I still have lost to that brat, Yoshitatsu?"

"You...You have a point there.....But...But no matter how small your army was, with your intelligence you should not have been defeated so utterly. Even if he's your son, Saitou Yoshitatsu, there is no reason for you to show mercy.

"Correct. Actually....."

"Act...actually?"

While showing off an expression of pain and rubbing his back, Dousan explained the situation.

"Actually there is a genius strategist with intelligence far above mine. Though it's unbearable, I have to admit she is someone I can't defeat."

"Genius strategist?"

"Does Mino have such a person? No no, the Mino army's strategist should only be Dousan." Katsuie and the others tilt their heads in puzzlement.

"Mino has such a hidden talent still... I'm totally in the dark, Viper."

"Hahaha. It's not strange at all that you knew nothing about her. She does not want to meddle in the countries' affairs and has been in recluse till now..... The her name is..."

"Takenaka Hanbei, isn't it?" Sagara said it without blinking.

"Oioi! Brat! I had created such an atmosphere and yet you... Ow...! My back, my back!!!"

"You know of her, Saru?!"

"What a question, that bastard is a very famous genius strategist in Japanese history! His intelligence is 98 even without any item equipped, a totally unbalanced character!"

"Saying something monkey again, what is that 'ai~tei~mu'?"

"Giving other people points is my right actually." The Oda clan's females started to talk among themselves.

“Oioioi, isn’t Takenaka Hanbei being called as the ' Current Zhuge Liang'? How can you guys show such a bewildered face?!”

“I know nothing at all!”

“.....Current Zhuge Liang? Who’s that?”

“Saru, don’t tell me you're a spy sent from Mino?”

“Oioi, there is something strange within those lines, Nobuna.”

“Ridiculous! Don’t use such an affectionate name, you Saru-suke.”

“You are the one being impolite, ok?”

Dousan laughed, “Hahahaha. As expected from Oda clan’s number one guy, totally correct. Takenaka Hanbei has an aloof personality, that’s why she is unknown to the world. This girl can be considered my hidden dragon. ”

“'Hidden dragon'. That should be the nickname of Zhuge Liang in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. As expected, Hanbei is a genius that rivals Zhuge Liang?”

"There is no reason for a mere monkey to be so arrogant for just knowing some Chinese history." Nobuna's lips formed the ^ shape again.

"Exactly, actually in Japan, there are two genius strategists. If one can ally with both of them, it won't be long before one can conquer the world. First is the Hidden Dragon, Mino's Takenaka Hanbei. She has been a genius from birth, and has been discovered for quite some time. As for the other, she is 'Young Phoenix', though she is immature as of now, given time she will definitely rise like the phoenix. She is....."

"Kuroda Kanbei, right?"

"Oi!!! Why did you snatch my cool moments again and again, you brat!" Dousan shouted.

"Sagara-dono, as expected from our no. 1 general!"

"It's nothing at all, both of them are old faces in all Sengoku games. I feel embarrassed being complimented by you. It's totally nothing since I'm only playing games. "

"Oh. This mystical stuff "Sengoku Geimu" from the country of monkeys, what a scary item!"

"Oi, I'm not from the country of monkeys!" Sagara shouted.

"Yes, it's probably that the country of monkeys is a bit more advanced. How could someone like this guy be the number one smart guy? But Viper, is that Takenake Hanbei that strong?"

"That goes without saying. Most importantly, this guy is the strongest and most difficult enemy of Nobuna-dono and me."

"What do you mean?"

"Even if I explain it to Nobuna-dono, you won't be able to understand... For realistic people like me and you, to put it simply she is someone with abnormal talent."

"Abnormal talent? You make it sound suspicious."

"Takenaka Hanbei isn't just a strategist, she is an onmyouji. She even knows the old strategies of this country that were lost long ago."

"Weren't onmyoujis the trend in Kyoto in the Heian period, something like a fortune teller? Do such people still exist now?" Nobuna asked.

From the Muromachi period, aides that have been protecting the daimyos have been using the onmyoujis to decide which day to attack, and using them to cast spells on enemies were not uncommon. But, as new and rising sengoku daimyos, Saitou Dousan and Oda Nobuna did not care about things that were not scientific.

They would rather order their troops to move and attack freely or to initiate lightning fast battles than rely on old fortune telling techniques that slow down their troop movements. Because of this, Nobuna was shocked to hear that this genius strategist Takenaka Hanbei was an onmyouji, an old and mysterious entity.

"Now in this era of western science, such an advisor is not my opponent at all! It's tricks at most."

"Seeing is believing. You will understand once you face her in battle, but you might lose your life."

"You won't know what will happen unless you try! Everyone, move out to Mino now! Let me see what is so great about this Takenaka Hanbei with my own eyes!"

Nobuna stood up gallantly, and rushed out alone.

Everyone has already gotten used to her behavior.

"Oi, wait! What are you gonna do if you rush out alone!?"

Sagara and Inuchiyo chased after her too.

But,

Sagara was thinking to himself, *A plan like the battle of Okehezama will most likely not work...*, and was beginning to have a bad feeling about this. Dousan stopped Sagara, who took off after Nobuna and gave him an idea. "Brat, Nobuna-dono will most likely be heading towards defeat . Can you keep this a secret from Nobuna-dono and lend me 50 of your soldiers?" Sagara agreed and nodded.

"Conquer and return my godfather Dousan's Mino with your own hands!"

Nobuna personally lead thousands of the Owari army, and headed towards the lands of Mino. Though they had met with some defense of the resisting Mino army, they were defeated one by one. Owari's army seemed unstoppable.

Owari's army had always been rated as the weakest, and the master was that fool princess Nobuna. Not long ago, the people had still been using these to laugh. But after attaining the miraculous victory in the battle of Okehazama, not only did Nobuna's fame rise rapidly, the Owari soldiers who had always had low morale had been discussing among themselves, "Our princess-sama, though she looks like a fool, she has the backbone of a hero." "Ohoh, I've also seen it; on the eve of the battle of Okehazama, princess-dono had committed to die and danced to the tune! That scene was so beautiful that I cried, I cried!!" "For our beautiful princess-sama, even if it's to the depths of hell, we will....."

The soldiers became like this, having rarely shown morale and motivation. Looks like no matter the era, guys will always fall for beautiful women. At the front of the troops and holding the job of vanguard is obviously the fiercest general of the Owari army, Shibata Katsuie. In the middle are Nobuna's personal bodyguards,

Nagahide and Inuchiyo. At the back of the army, being rated the weakest in Owari, is Kanjuurou Nobukatsu.

Always taking care of things around Katsuie, and being commented by Nobuna that he is totally useless when facing the strong Mino army, he was thrown to the back of the army. In the midst of Nobukatsu's army, Sagara was present too.

As he sucked at horse riding, he could only continue to ride behind Goemon. "Why did she throw me at the back !? I wanna make some big achievements in this battle, this is disappointing."

"It can't be helped. It's pvious people will wurry if Sagara-shi can't get uzed to horse riding."

"Really, after getting the promotion of rank, it has no meaning if you can't even ride a horse into battle."

"Ahhhh, we have peacefully passed the Sakai river, and the enemies are all gone. How I wish we could just rest here for the day....." Nobukatsu said with a refreshing smile.

"Too naïve, Nobukatsu. Didn't your father, Nobuhide, get defeated when he camped in the middle of the

enemies' grounds? We can't let them ambush us, so we should just rush all the way in."

"Father-sama was defeated because of Saitou Dousan. Now that Saitou Dousan is guarding Aoshuu for us, defeating Saitou Yoshitatsu should be a piece of cake. No matter what, that big brute is just someone without brains. He is nothing compared to me, as expected of the gentleman of Owari. Hahahahaha"

"You should have a limit to your optimism," Sagara thought.

"Oh, there's mist now..... And it's getting thicker, Saru-kun."

"It's so weird to have mist at such a time at night, but with this, it seems like advancing any further will be impossible."

Seems like Nobuna who is in the middle of the army is considering stopping for now.

Shibata Katsuie's vanguard army had also stopped moving; with this, the whole army had stopped in the forest called "Nagamori". The town at the tip is just in front, and the distance between the Owari army and

Inabayama castle was just a short 4 km. “By the way, during the time when saving Dousan, it seemed like there was mist too.”

Sagara thought while his heart was filled with a weird restlessness. *At that time, it’s because of the mist that I could get near Dousan’s base. I would like to think that it was natural weather, but if it’s not a coincidence and someone made it to disable Dousan’s chain of command...*

"Impossible. A magician who can control mist should not exist. Maybe during the Heian period which was full of demons and ghosts, but this is the Sengoku era. “Even in the most esteemed game “Oda Nobunaga no Yabou”, there is no magic command like in RPG games. A battle’s outcome is decided on the amount of soldiers, equipment , and the general leading them,” Sagara muttered to himself.

At that moment... suddenly, there were shouts all around them. Mino soldiers started coming out from the forest, the dam, and villages to ambush the Owari army.

“Damn, an ambush!”

Following battle drums, soldiers started rushing out in waves; it's almost like the strategy of the genius strategist from "Romance of the three kingdoms", Zhuge Liang.

"Wh...Wh...Wh...What is going on, Saru-kun?!"

"We underestimated Mino. Battling us with small amounts of soldiers and retreating repeatedly was all to trap us here at "Nagamori"! This place is most likely the centre of the ambush, and because of the mist, Nobuna did not notice that this is a death trap!"

"Ahhhhhhhhh!"

"My ears hurt from that! Oi, don't shout suddenly at my side, Nobukatsu."

"This is a habit of the Oda family! If we don't report to Onee-sama now..."

"No... it seems like the troops are being decimated."

The enemies were coming from all directions without stopping. All they could hear were the drums. Being scared and frightened, the Owari soldiers dropped their spears and started running away.

"Ahhhh...! Unbelievable, the Owari army that crushed Imagawa Yoshimoto is being crushed so easily! If... if I don't rush to Onee-sama and protect her, Onee-sama will ....."

"Calm down, I'm going over to Nobuna's side now! Nobukatsu, try and think of a way to group the soldiers together, do your job of being the back support properly! Be careful of any ambushes and ensure that the retreat path is safe!"

"I will lead Onee-sama's troops over to the river, Saru-kun!"

"Let's go over to the princess's side, Sagara-shi."

Goemon straddled the horse and galloped away with Sagara. As expected of a ninja, her night vision was outstanding. On such a misty night, she could still find the position of Nobuna's troops and dash over in a straight line. But while Sagara tried to reach Nobuna, the troops were being depleted fast.

"What the hell is going on? And what is with this disgusting mist, so troublesome!"

“Nobuna, we fell into Takenaka Hanbei’s trap! If we don’t retreat now, we will be trapped. Please give the order to retreat now!”

“This level of ambush, it will be all over if we finish all of them off!”

“No, the ambush numbers are still increasing.”

“What? Isn't it over already?”

“Hanbei set up heavy ambushes at different spots! Because of this mist, your decision making skills have become slow too.”

Even before Nobuna’s voice faded, more waves of ambushing soldiers revealed themselves following the drum sounds.

“Che...I, I don’t believe in such a superstitious thing like onmyouji! This mist is just a coincidence, nothing but a coincidence. "

“You can be stubborn all you want when we are back in Aoshuu!”

"No... No... Not stubborn at all! You cursed Saru, which side are you on!?"

The way Mino's army chased Nobuna could only be described as pressing. Just when Nobuna uneasily broke through the third wave of the ambush, the fourth and fifth waves of the ambush charged at them through the white mist. Shibata Katsuie and Inuchiyo's bamboo spears pierced up and down finally opening up a bloody path. But just when they thought they had reached somewhere safe, from just a signal from the drums, the sixth and seventh waves of the ambush charged straight towards them.

"Hime-sama, this is an ambush from all sides! If this goes on, we will be decimated. 0 points!" The usually demure and gentle Niwa Nagahide shouted, her armor splattered with drops of enemy blood as she swung her Naginata.

"Ambushed from all sides?"

"A strategist from ancient China, named "Chen Li", this is his favorite technique, laying lots of ambushes around an area and using a tiny amount of troops to lure the enemy in..."

"Again with the Zhuge Liang's traps!" Nobuna snorted.

"I'm afraid the enemies' strategist is well aware of different ancient traps and techniques, this must be Takenaka Hanbei's work."

"Manchiyo! Did I get overly arrogant after the victory of Okehazama?"

"No, Hime-sama should have been able to detect the ambush if there was no mist. This time we were just unlucky."

Nagahide decisively swung her Naginata while consoling Nobuna, who was shivering with anguish on her horse, tightly biting her own rosy lips.

"Anyway, we should retreat back to Aoshuu!"

"Understood!"

"Saru, stop falling into a daze like a fool and protect me properly!"

"Who is falling into a daze!? I beg you Goemon, use your smoke screen to fight against this mist!"

"I got it!"

With no concern about hierarchy at all, Sagara brought his ninja right before his master Nobuna.

Goemon threw her smoke bombs in all directions, creating a smokescreen to blind the enemies.

And at that exact moment, there was a small troop of Nobuna's army walking out from the south of Inabayama. At the sight of this new troop, the Mino army shouted, "Not good, Nobuna's army is counter attacking by going straight to Inabayama castle."

The pursuit for Nobuna stopped while all of them were panicking.

It looks like the Mino army was still wary of Nobuna's lightning speed assault when she attacked Okehazama. But in fact, the small troop was actually the soldiers Sagara lent to Saitou Dousan, who used his knowledge of the topology around Inabayama lead them over. This 50 people strong troop held torches and moved like they

were a big army invading the area. These people under Sagara who made a living by stealing are shouting “The festival has begun!” and lit up the whole side of Inabayama, all the while making lots of noise.

The ambush stopped at the eighth wave, as the final wave that was supposed to give the final blow, panicked and ran towards Inabayama castle. The Oda army could be said to have narrowly escaped elimination.

“What is this? Who are those reinforcements?”

The retreating Nobuna was full of questions, but Sagara, riding behind Goemon did not answer. He did not want to let Nobuna know that Dousan had expected this defeat. High in morale after defeating Imagawa Yoshimoto, yet being defeated so utterly by Takenaka Hanbei, telling Nobuna the truth now would just worry her unnecessarily. Grasping this rare opportunity, Nobuna escaped frantically towards Aoshuu.

After retreating to Aoshuu, they were finally getting a grasp on the situation of Mino’s army. As expected, Saitou Yoshitatsu had recruited Takenaka Hanbei and given her commanding authority over his troops. The fearsome “Ambush from all sides” was also Hanbei’s

idea. Requiring deployment of several ambushes at different areas, people who can execute this kind of complicated and delicate plan perfectly are far and few between. But in the hands of Hanbei, this “Ambush from all sides” was executed so easily. If not for the small troop acting out a counterattacking army and distracting the Mino’s army attention, Nobuna might have been surrounded and cut off from all retreat routes by this “ Ambush from all sides”.

If that was really the case, it would really be hard to predict if they would be able to return to Aoshuu safely. For Takenaka Hanbei to defeat Owari as easily as she might play with a kid was enough to have Nobuna fuming with anger.

“What kind of battle was that, this is just playing around! I’m totally being played around by her!”

Being driven by humiliation and killing intent, while stomping repeatedly the ground, Nobuna was ranting on “We must attack again tonight!” But after Nagahide’s “ Everyone is still wary of Hanbei, and the fatigue from last night has not been fully recovered, we must at least

let the troops rest for a week. 20 points." Nobuna simmered down and vented her anger on her favorite chicken drumstick for a whole week.

During this time, Sagara walked in and out of Dousan's house, frantically seeking an answer to how to defeat Hanbei, while Dousan kept scratching his head while thinking too. During this era where western culture was slowly seeping into Japan, Takenaka Hanbei who was well versed in the Onmyoudou of ancient Japan and capable of different spells could be called a last boss character. And as Nobuna was a realistic person, their characters could be described as water and fire, nemesis to the end.

During this week, Sagara was even thinking of ways to conquer Inabayama castle during his sleep. Also during this period, Omi's Asai Nagamasa had been sending letters to Nobuna asking if they should send reinforcements. Of course, that would mean Nobuna would have to agree to Nagamasa's marriage proposal. And in truth, it would also mean she would be handing Owari's power and influence over to Nagamasa. Nobuna rejected all these temptation-like proposals, and declared to the envoy that she would use her own power to conquer Mino. But the tricks of this strongest Onmyouji,

the genius strategist Takenaka Hanbei, were not as simple as just the “Ambush from all sides.”

This week of waiting and thinking passed by in an instant, and in the blink of an eye it’s the time to move out to Inabayama castle. Using a fake army to ensure a retreat route was no longer an option. The same trick might work twice if its against Yoshitatsu, but it most likely would not fool Hanbei again. Because of this, Nobuna, Katsuie and Sagara had made the resolve to battle to their deaths.

“Everyone, there will be an adjustment to our route. So as to not allow any ambush from Mino, we will move out from Pingyuan! Don’t forget to send in spies.”

In the second invasion of Mino, Nobuna made large adjustments to the army. The vanguard would be led by Owari’s weakest, Oda Nobukatsu. The appreciative Nobukatsu cried while saying “Onee-sama! I Nobukatsu will not fail your expectations, and swear to perform the duties of a vanguard to the end!”

Looking at her brother's behavior, Nobuna gave a uncaring face and said “We do not know what Hanbei will do this time, so you will be the one who will walk at

the front. Enjoy being cannon fodder." This plain act of letting her own brother be the sacrifice gave Nobukatsu quite a scare.

"It's too dangerous to move out at night, so we will move during the day under the sunlight. Beware of any ambush and move out!"

Nobuna led an army of 2000 soldiers and moved out from Aoshuu castle at dawn. Once again, the Oda army moved out from the river and towards Mount Inaba. Though the river's waters were fast moving, the water level was not deep and the horses and foot soldiers were just barely able to cross it.

"Now there is no way for "Ambush from all sides" to work! Even if the enemy appears, our losses will only be Kanjuurou at most!" What a mean sister, though she did not mean it at all.

While worrying about her little brother being the vanguard, and sending out spies to detect any traces of enemy ambush, the Oda army slowly and carefully walked into enemy territory. After crossing the river and

reaching the plains, Nobuna set fire to her surroundings. Of course, she did not do it out of it being a hobby of hers.

"As a precaution, burn any areas that seem suspicious! I will not give Hanbei any chance for an ambush!"

The troops led by Kanjuurou were in the first section; the second section consisting of Katsuie's troops followed behind with a bit of distance between them. At the back of the army, were the troops led by Nobuna. To prevent any surprise attacks from the enemy, all troops deployed a circle defensive formation. This behavior was totally unfitting of the usually rash style of Nobuna. This was an iron wall formation where if there was any enemy attacks from the sides or back, all troops would be able to quickly surround them and finish them all. But this time around, Nobuna had lost her biggest weapon - Speed, though she herself had not noticed this just yet.

Although they were supposed to move towards Inabayama castle, the troops lead by Kanjuurou were now in a state of complete panic. After moving for a while, they were enveloped by an unknown white mist, and their area of sight started to get worse, though this was just a start. After returning to their senses, they

found out that they had left the road to the castle and had walked into a swamp full of towers formed by huge rocks.

"What... is this place?"

No matter how slow, the inauspicious aura created by this stone maze made Nobukatsu know the danger of it, having lost his way again and again. But Nobukatsu who had rashly stepped into this stone maze couldn't find the way he walked in and had no way to get out too. This maze was created by using the stone towers effectively to make any intruder lose their way.

Discovering this, the Owari army at the back had already stepped into the stone maze.

"No...no...no...no...not good, if this goes on, Onee-sama will be lost in this stone maze too!"

Nobukatsu ran around the maze like an ant on a frying pan, but no matter how he moved, what was in front of him were similarly shaped stone towers. He rode around in the maze in a frenzy, but in the end, he couldn't find a way out.

This kind of rash action only advanced them deeper into the maze where the soil texture below them kept getting softer and softer. The horses they were riding on seemed to take their next step with increasing difficulty, and gave the army lots of trouble.

“It seems like the enemy is using the muddy swamp area near the river to create a maze and trap us in there.” Nobukatsu almost burst out in tears.

Trapped in the maze like him, Yoshiharu, Goemon and Nobukatsu's sister Nobuna all crowded around him after hearing his cry of anguish.

“Don’t give up, Nobukatsu! A maze like this can be easily overcome by just sticking close to the walls!”

“Yeah, Kanjuurou, this kind of demonic trick is nothing at all!”

Nobuna gathered her trusted aides to start discussing a way to get out of this maze.

“Manchiyo! What is going on with this maze? Don’t tell me it’s another trap from Takenaka Hanbei?”

"Yes, I think this is the legendary trap by Zhuge Liang, 'Stone Sentinel Maze'".

It seems like Nagahide had a deep understanding of ancient Chinese literature.

"Finally the trap devised by Zhuge Liang whose intelligence is at 100 points has appeared. No matter what, Takenaka Hanbei is known as the current Zhuge Liang," Sagara said.

"Hime, if this goes on, I'm afraid that the enemy will divert the river to this stone maze and drown our whole army. 0 points."

"Manchiyo, do you know where the exit is?"

"This stone tower maze seems to be built under the theory of the 8 trigrams. There should be The Gate of Opening (開, Kaimon), The Gate of Healing (, Kyūmon), The Gate of Life (, Seimon), The Gate of Pain (, Shōmon), The Gate of Limit (, Tomon), The Gate of Insight (, Keimon), The Gate of Wonder (,Kyōmon), and The Gate of Death (, Shimon): a total of 8 gates."

"The 8 triagrams?"

"It's one of the theories of war, and the foundation behind our country's onmyoudou."

"Huh. In other words, it's a demon art too... That Takenaka Hanbei is getting on my nerves more and more ."

"Out of these 8 gates, it is said that passing through the Limit and Death gate will result in certain death. It seems like we have walked through the Gate of Death."

"What death? This kind of thing is only superstition! No matter what, we should follow the wall and find a way out....."

Swooosh...

Even before the voice of Nobuna faded, a sudden flood appeared in front of their eyes and put them waist deep in water.

"What? What the hell is this!?"

"The water from the river has been directed over here, our army's situation is just 1 point."

And it looks like the water level was still rising. If this went on, it was certain that they would drown.

Though Sagara was anxious too, he couldn't find a way to escape. Who would have thought that the legendary trap that Zhuge Liang devised would be used so perfectly here by Takenaka Hanbei!

(I remember in the romance of three kingdoms, Lu Xun who was trapped in this stone maze was also faced with an impending flood. During that time, either Zhuge Liang's uncle or grandfather tells him the way to escape …..)

If Takenaka Hanbei's uncle or grandfather could come and tell the enemy, Nobuna, the way to escape from here ... That kind of thing will never happen, I guess.

Oh yeah, I should rely on ninjas in this kind of situation.

Throwing smoke bombs and using kage bunshin no jutsu, no matter what, the real magicians in the Sengoku era are the ninjas!

If it's Goemon, there should be a way out!

"Go...Go...Go...Goemon! You understand things like onmyoudou and the 8 triagrams, right?"

Goemon poked her head out from one of the stone towers and said, "I'm just a ninja~degozaru. The path of a ninja does not include these. In the end, it's gust apout the yays to strengthen one's heart."

"I don't understand a single thing from the extent of your stutter!"

"Uuuuu. In other words, the path of a ninja means to learn things from reality."

I get it, Yoshiharu nods. So as to say, though they sometimes use blinding techniques, the ninja is not an existence that transcends reality.

To create a smokescreen, you will need smoke grenades. Kage bunshin is actually a technique which uses high speed movements to create an illusion that there are more than one person. The shockingly powerful jumps of a ninja were due to daily training and strengthening of their bodies, and as for the kunais that fly everywhere, the theory is the same as baseball, using the air's friction and gravity combined with throwing

strength to create various throws. But in reality, Ninja don't ride on big toads.

As for those users who use techniques which completely defied logic and could never be explained by science, are those onmyoujis.

"Oi!!! If you have guts, stop using these devious traps and come out here! That Takenaka! If you have the skills, fight me fairly with a bamboo spear!!!" Katsuie shouted loudly with a face full of tears, but Yoshiharu felt that it would be stupid of Hanbei to come out.

"Use your brain and think, Katsuie. If the opponent is someone who can win against you with a spear, is there a need for her to be an onmyouji?"

"Shut up! I can never accept those kind of ridiculous people."

"Onee-sama! Things have come to such a situation all because of me being a useless vanguard. The fault totally lies with me, Nobukatsu! Allow me to commit senpuku and atone..."

"Stop, Kanjuurou. What will committing senpuku solve?"

"But compared to senpuku, drowning is much more painful Onee-sama! Uwaaaa~!"

As everyone is panicking, the water levels are rising fast.

"Everyone, stop panicking! If you want to hate, hate Takenaka Hanbei for not choosing to follow the Viper and instead choosing that short idiot! Because of her, we can't reach our target Inabayama castle and have to struggle here."

Once again, while grinding her teeth in humiliation, she encouraged her aides. Compared to the previous ambush, this time they were trapped in this rock maze without a real fight even beginning.

"No matter what, we must go back to Aoshuu alive!"

"We can't hold on anymore, Onee-sama!"

"If I...I...I...I was not so stupid, things would have been better! I'm really sorry, Hime-sama!"

"Everyone, listen! If we can beat Hanbei, we will arrange a feast to celebrate! And if we can conquer

Inabayama castle, no matter what it is, I will reward you guys! Any request is ok!"

"Three year supply of Uiroumochi....." Inuchiyo starts to drool.

Wait, any request can be fulfilled? Sagara's eyes started to sparkle with anticipation. "Is what you said true?"

"That's rude, Saru. As a samurai, I won't go back on my words."

"Don't tell me you'll just agree to anything because you're feeling suicidal and think we are going to die here ?!"

"Though I do not want to admit, I can never beat an opponent who is this unpredictable! What is this "Stone Sentinel Maze"! Like what Viper said, this is the worst kind of enemy to me who follows normal logic."

"Hime, even onmyoudou have their own set of rules and logic. Of course, this logic is different from the logic we know, but saying it is illogical is just an act of running away from the truth."

"Manchiyo, this kind of military lesson, wait until we are back in Aoshuu and you can be fussy with me!"

Ok! Sagara rolled up his sleeves. "No matter what, I will bring all of you back to Aoshuu! The reward, I can get whatever I want! Remember your promise, Hime-sama!"

Yoshiharu's motivation shot up like a rocket launching into the sky.

As the saying goes, a man driven to desperation can do anything. All of a sudden, Yoshiharu thought of an idea.

Yoshiharu couldn't help but scream in his heart, *There is no need for any exit! It's because we follow logic that we lose ! We should follow our own ways now!*

"Hurry up, start to dig, Goemon! Push down these stone towers, use them as stepping stones."

"I get it~nya. You want to break out of this maze by pushing down the towers~nya."

Goemon stutters right after she opens her mouth. Looks like she is getting anxious too.

"Yes! Though I do not understand the logic behind the stone sentinel maze, if we destroy the maze itself, we should be able to walk out of it! And while doing that, we can use the stones as stepping stones to prevent any danger of drowning!"

"Sagara-dono, it is shockingly simple, but to think that you can find a loophole in one of Hanbei's traps, 85 points."

Nagahide nods and agrees, and Katsuie at the side pulls out her katana.

"Not using your brain and just destroy everything, right? Leave it to me!"

~Destructive noises~

Katsuie's sword destroyed all of the stone towers as easily as striking down a bowling pin. Looking at Katsuie who had taken the form of Ashura, the soldiers at the side started to use their spears and work on the stone towers too.

Inuchiyo, while whispering ".....feeling better", took out her own spear too.

Looking at her subordinates suddenly acting in cohesion, Nobuna was surprised. "Just because you can't find the exit, you destroy the maze. What a ridiculous strategy."

Just like how in the famous riddle "Stand the egg up", Columbus gave a shocking answer of "Crack the bottom of the egg". Though Yoshiharu's way is a bit cunning, it does have a curious similarity to him. Totally ignoring the questioner's objectives and correct answer, using brute force to force a way out, it can be considered a groundbreaking solution too.

It's like losing in a game of chess, yet overturning the whole chessboard, a totally ridiculous way of doing things. As expected of a guy who follows his own rules.

On the other hand, though Nobuna said she did not believe in things like onmyoudou, she unwittingly wanted to pit her own intelligence with Hanbei. Because of this, she continued to try to find an exit to the stone sentinel maze, while totally forgetting about the solution of just destroying the maze itself.

While wearing a face like "0^0", Nobuna stood on the stepping stone that Katsuie destroyed and said, "Don't...

Don't let this get over your head, Saru! In the end, the reward can only be given to you once you conquer Inabayama castle! Something small like this is nothing."

Helping Goemon push down the stone towers, full of dirt but with an expression full of motivation, Yoshiharu interrupted her and said, "You are really not cute at all! Will you die just to show a bit of gratitude towards my plan!?"

"Che... This isn't human knowledge! This is knowledge from a monkey who has given up on logical thinking! And no matter what, you have no proof this is a way out, do you?"

"Noisy! Listen, I will definitely conquer Inabayama castle for you to see! And once I do it, don't you forget about that promise of 'any request will be fulfilled'!"

"Eh?.....I...I got it already."

"No matter if it's conquering the world, or marrying the man you love, I will not give up! I will definitely fulfill them for you!"

Yoshiharu's eyes were filled with dazzling motivation as he was shouting "Don't forget the reward". Nobuna,

noticing this and getting affected by this aura he was emitting, started blushing furiously. Sagara had never spoke a word about Nagamasa's marriage with Nobuna, but Nobuna finally understood deeply that Sagara was in fact anxious that he did not have any achievement yet.

After destroying the stone maze completely, the exit finally appeared in front of the nearly drowned Oda's army. While on the route back to Aoshuu, Nobuna, on horseback, started whispering to herself, "......What if..... What if that Saru wants me as a reward....."

"If it's like that, what should I do?"

"The words have been spoken, the promise can no longer be retracted. But no matter what, our status are too different.....If Saru really conquers Inabayama Castle, how about promoting him to a general..... but in the end, that's still an adviser. An...And, compared to this guy who came from nowhere, being the same monkey, compared to Saruyashamaru, Asai Nagamasa, they are like heaven and earth, there is not much of a possibility....."

"But...But that guy seems unexpectedly reliable..... And he saved my life numerous times..... Th...That guy's

dream is to do ecchi things with the world's number one bishoujo, so as to say..... Ahhhhh... Why must I think of such a thing!?"

Nobuna thought "This isn't good", and started to regret her promise of a reward and started panicking while blushing. In the back, Katsuie shouted, "Whose achievement will be the biggest?", and Sagara, while unwillingly starting to perform a comedy skit, did not notice Nobuna's expression at all.

Once again they returned to Aoshuu, and early next morning, Nobuna summoned her two most trusted advisers, Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide.

"Uuuu, why must Hime-sama find us to talk about Yoshiharu's matters?"

"Hime-sama is so attracted to that damn Saru and keeps siding with him on matters. Damn..." Katsuie's rage towards Yoshiharu seemed to increase day by day.

"So, what did you guys quarrel about today?"

On the other side, though Nagahide admitted that she did not have the weird thinking patterns of Nobuna and Yoshiharu, her presence as someone highly intelligent was reliable to Nobuna.

"Not really quarreling..... That guy arrogantly asked me not to forget about the reward after conquering Mino. "

"I understand. Previously, as part of the promise to give him the number one bishoujo of the world, you gave the young Nene to Sagara. It's a good thing that the lonely Yoshiharu has obtained a cute sister, but no matter how people see it, it's a clear act of deceit. 13 points."

"That's the thing.... That's why he is now pestering me to reward him properly, how irritating."

"Haha, is he still bent on having the number one bishoujo of the world?"

Nobuna's face was painted with a light shade of pink, while saying in low voice, "......I don't know already.....It might be that Saru.....is actually proposing to me."

"Eh?"

cough Nagahide, who is usually calm, spat the tea out of her mouth together with Katsuie.

"Ah, how rude of me. But no matter what, this kind of reward is too ridiculous. Hime is the one and only leader of the Oda clan, and Yoshiharu is Hime's advisor who previously was just an unknown vagrant. There is no chance of being together. 0 points."

"Th...Th...That ero-saru! He finally revealed his true motive to capture the Oda clan! What a bastard, looks like I have to kill you with my own hands!"

"Wait, Riku. This is just a possibility. I'm just thinking if that was the case."

"Hime, what kind of proof do you have to think this of Sagara-dono?"

"Yeah, Hime-sama. What makes you so mindful of that damn Saru's ambitions?"

そ、それって、もしかしたら私に『俺の嫁になれ』って
言ってるんじゃないかしら……なんて……

Nobuna used her finger on the tatami and started drawing circles, while stuttering, ".....er....That...That marriage between me and Nagamasa, he does not seem to agree with it. And Saru, that guy, though he always says things like 'I'm not cute at all and violent too', he did do his best all the time right? And.....he did put on airs and say "No matter if it's conquering the world or marrying the man you love, I will definitely fulfill them for you!" so...so as to say, he might be implying to me 'Be my bride!'.....things like that..... If...If things really become like that, I had already promised to give him anything he wants. I can't escape this time. If...If Saru really conquered Mino this time, we...we...we can't do anything about it.....Er... And a sa...samurai does not go back on his words!"

"Hime-sama, this talk is no longer about asking how to punish Sagara-dono for his disrespectful attitude. It's just normal sweet talking that couples do. 12 points."

Shibata Katsuie started to tremble with anger, the veins in her forehead were almost stressed to the point of breaking. She stood up while drawing her sword, "Un... Un...Unforgivable! He actually da...da...dared to let Nobuna-sama display such an act of helplessness....."

"......It...It has not been decided if it's really a proposal, Riku! In the end, I'm just troubled....."

"Damn Saru, you actually plan to snatch away the invincible, but yet to fall in love, heart of Hime-sama!? Compared to Nagamasa, this bastard is actually more dangerous! Let's kill him now!"

"Gosh, I already said not to kill my saru without reason, right?"

"Correct, Riku-dono. Sagara-dono's already an officer now; killing him without a reason is not permitted."

".....My.....'My Saru'? The relationship between the two of you had advanced to such a stage.....? Ahhhhhhh! I can't take it, I should just go and die now!"

"Eh? What are you saying, Riku?"

Nobuna's face was that of a young girl's in a fantasy-esque love, but the situation did not develop in the direction where she was fantasizing.

Chapter 3 : Battle for the right to obtain Takenaka Hanbei!

For Humans, there is this term known as “friendship”---This philosophy exists in the Sengoku era as well. As for Nobuna, who considers herself a logical person, the onmyouji Takenaka Hanbei is a great headache to her.

Hence, as long as the onmyouji adviser Takenaka Hanbei is still guarding Mino, Nobuna will be unable to conquer Inabayama Castle.

If this situation persists, then Nobuna will have no choice but to bow her head and accept Asai Nagamasa's marriage proposal in exchange for reinforcements. If this occurs, then no matter how Nobuna tries to conquer the world, the conquered lands and their rewards will all be the property of Nagamasa.

However, should Nobuna capture Mino on her own, the combined forces of Owari's Oda Clan will have surpassed Asai Nagamasa's forces in Northern Omi. If that's the case, even if Nobuna refused Nagamasa's marriage proposal, a balanced alliance between Owari and Northern Omi would still be possible.

This is precisely the reason for the reward Yoshiharu wants at all costs:

"The cancellation of the marriage between Nagamasa and Nobuna".

That is all there is to it.

No matter how much one must compromise to conquer the world, Yoshiharu does not want Nobuna to marry someone who doesn't love her at all.

His wish is that that idiot Nobuna could live freely according to her ideals, no matter the time and place. Not just as a Sengoku Daimyo; Oda Nobuna herself needs to pursue her dreams, but more importantly she needs to pursue her happiness as an ordinary girl. If not, the Nobuna we see now will no longer be Nobuna anymore.

Though that pretty-face Nagamasa had said "There should be a limit for selfishness. In the end, you are just a brat with no sense of responsibility." Sagara scoffed at that and replied, "I don't mind being the brat; I don't mind giving dumb opinions, but right now my feelings are clear, and I will always stand by them."

"Even if Nobuna hates me or calls me a reckless idiot, I will definitely stop this omiai[7] by any means necessary. Just you watch!"

"....Inuchiyo was thinking the exact same thing."

"Our current objective is to find ways to get close to Hanbei and persuade her to join the Oda clan. To put it simply, it's the Pull-Outstanding-Talents-Like-Her-Over plan. The so called 'Head-hunting'!"

"....Good luck."

That's all for recaps.

Back in the present, the place is Mino, Kinkazan, located at the foot of Inabayama, part of Inokuchi.

Yoshiharu, together with Inuchiyo, dressed as vagrants and snuck into the town.

In fact, Nobuna had not granted them permission for this mission, but their aim was to win over the genius tactician Takenaka Hanbei.

Yoshiharu did not want to waste his time by obediently suggesting to Nobuna "How about we convince Hanbei to join us?", and if Nobuna answered " No way. It's impossible for a monkey like you to try and sow discord between them" and tried to stop them, things would only get more complicated.

The reason Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo managed to even reach Inokuchi is ultimately thanks to the aid of Goemon and her Kawanami clan members.

After going into the town, the first thing this happy-go-lucky Saru-Inu team did was patronize a teashop called "Ayu-ya" by the Nagawagara River.

Just as Goemon's report said, the shop 'Ayu-ya' here is having a Takenaka clan recruitment exercise, and at the moment it is in full-swing.

Finally, it's almost time for Takenaka Hanbei to move to Inabayama Castle to officially take up her role within the Saitou Clan. During this, she will definitely bring along her retainers and is planning to recruit some more too.

"After dressing up like a vagrant and becoming one of Takenaka Hanbei's retainers, I will use my fiery passion and speech to convince her to join the Oda Clan. So perfect, it's really a flawless plan!"

"....Yoshiharu, we don't have extra cash to go to tea shops."

"Leave that to me!"

Yoshiharu's monthly wage was 33 kan.

Although such a shabby wage is fitting for an officer like Yoshiharu, a big part of it is also that Nobuna is notorious for her stinginess.

Yoshiharu however, being experienced in Sengoku games, had his own way of getting money. As a result of asking Goemon to sell rice in various places, Yoshiharu's pockets were rather deep.

Originally, if an individual wanted to do business outside of Owari, the person has to pay a tax at the border.

An example is if one wants to transport rice from Owari to Mino, in order to pass through the border the person has to pay a certain amount of taxes to Saitou Yoshitatsu's side.

The only Daimyos in the Tokaido area who made an effort to develop commerce and abolished this tax system are the lord of Mino, Saitou Dousan (in the past) and the current master of Owari, Oda Nobuna.

Most other Daimyos still use border taxes as a main source of income.

Also, since the taxation cost isn't cheap, originally this kind of re-selling behavior would not be profitable at all, no matter how one looked at it.

But the Kanawanami gang aren't ordinary decent law-abiding merchants. They would never even think of going through the border gate, instead choosing to sneak in using routes that only ninjas and bandits know of; they never once payed taxes.

Using this method, Yoshiharu managed to earn a small fortune by smuggling rice.

In contrast, the innocent Inuchiyo had suffered starvation. After being exiled by the Oda Clan, Inuchiyo escaped to the mountains alone. Thus to fill her stomach during her journey, she became unknowingly wild.

The reason why Inuchiyo has a flat, washboard-like body, is probably due to the protein lacking fiveleaf aralia soup..... After thinking that, Yoshiharu went " Uuuu what a poor thing", and cried despite Inuchiyo using all her might to pinch his cheeks with a radiant smile on her face.

But because of his small fortune, Yoshiharu managed to surpass the crowd of poor ronins and gain the top position in the Takenaka clan.

If they were generous enough, this interview will definitely leave a good impression on them.

Since it is an interview, Hanbei might just be observing the ronins from an unknown corner, so one needs to eat lavishly to get his attention.

"Alright, Inuchiyo! Don't hold back today, eat all you want until your belly bursts!"

"....the money for the food, it doesn't matter?"

"I'll handle it, Wahahahaha. Although we cannot enjoy to our heart's content in Kiyosu, I happen to have a personal stash of extra money, but keep it a secret from Nobuna."

".....Stolen.....?"

"No! I earned it all from actual business transactions! I just snuck past the borders!"

Inuchiyo suddenly readied her spear.

"........Trafficking from the borders is illegal."

"Wait! Wait! I only bypass our enemies' borders! That idiot Nobuna doesn't take border taxes!"

".....I'll let you off this time." Inuchiyo returned to her seat.

"Eat more, Inuchiyo, and then let your breasts grow as big as Katsuie! If you want your boobies to be bigger, you have to stop eating that non-nutritious fiveleaf araila soup and try to gain more protein and fat!"

".....Kanpaku[8] ....Death....?"

"No, No. I mean that if you ate more meat and fish, and drank more milk, your bust size will one day grow by leaps and bounds!"

"......Lies. Things like milk, I'm not drinking it. Yoshiharu, you are teasing me."

"Wrong, wrong, wrong. In my world, it's a trend for girls to drink milk. That is why their breasts are all very well developed."

".....Milk....Stinks....."

Inuchiyo was feeling conflicted. If drinking milk will make her breasts as big as Katsuie then.....but milk stinks a lot.....And besides, milk is for babies and children...And Inuchiyo is not a baby anymore....Ahah, but Inuchiyo's wash-board-flat breasts doesn't seem to differ from most children.

The maiden is struggling and shaking between desire and anxiety. But to normal people's eyes, Inuchiyo seems to be just sitting there motionlessly.

"Alright alright, just eat some fish first."

While looking at their table gradually filling up with Inokuchi's specialty, Inuchiyo's stomach begins to grumble honestly.

".....Itadakimasu."

"Since that devil Nobuna is not here today, let us enjoy it to the fullest! Wahahahaha!"

"....Delicious. Uuu~Uuu~"

Kacha Kacha Kacha Kacha.

Whether she simply liked the fish or actually desired to have bigger breasts by taking in more nutrients, Inuchiyo ate every single fish from head to tail.

Maeda Toshiie (Inuchiyo)

Even though she is usually the silent type, she can be rather gluttonous when food is involved.

"....Hoooo....Ahhh.....fish. Yummy."

"You know, you sure got this cheerful look when you eat. Now I more or less understand your feelings when Nobuna feeds you those uirou-mochi."

"......Jue~Jue~" *chewing sounds*

"Here, here, here, Inuchiyo~ I got some delicious fish here~"

"...Ah Ump." *Eating sounds*

"I caught an Inuchiyo!" Yoshiharu laughs.

"Let's do it once more~"

".....Ah~"

"Just joking. No eating right now." Yoshiharu took away the fish that was dangling in front of Inuchiyo's mouth.

".....ha-wu, ha-wu, ha-wu!"

Inuchiyo's mouth was opening and closing like that of a goldfish, chasing the fish in front of her eyes.

"——This is simply too fun!"

".....angry...."

"Pinch"——The burning sensation on Yoshiharu's cheeks finally brought him back to his senses.

".....If you have the energy to tease Inuchiyo, why don't you think about how to get chosen?"

"Oh, right right right!"

Speaking of which, where is the interview being held... .Just when I was about to stand up and look around, an old stranger suddenly approached and greeted us.

His attire and grooming seems pretty formal. He looks like he's a pretty influential warrior in Mino.

Although he has an aloof face, it seems like he does not have any ill intentions toward Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo. He had a hunched back and a friendly attitude, but somehow he gave off a feeling that he was being modest about his skills.

In essence, he gives off a rather mysterious aura.

"Youngster, you're here to serve Takenaka Hanbei, right?"

"You're right, Oji-san. I am the world's most ordinary ronin——Sagara Yoshiharu, and this is my younger brother, Inuchiyo. Do you know a lot about Takenaka Hanbei? "

"....younger sister, Inuchiyo."

"No one knows him more than I do."

"....Younger•Sister•Inu•chi•yo."

The old man accepted Inuchiyo's dishes and started eating while talking.

"I am Takenaka Shigetora——Hanbei's Uncle. Because Hanbei's parents died young, I am like a father to her, and I have been watching over her since she was young."

"Oh? So you must be a rather powerful warrior, right?"

"I'm called Ando of the Iga Keep, head of the Mino Three. I used to serve the Saitou Clan as one of the aides. I was once Dousan's right-hand man, but I've since retired despite all that. Now that Yoshitatsu-dono is in power, my position in the Saitou clan is non-existent. Still , it's a good thing that there is someone like Hanbei in our family."

But Hanbei isn't passionate enough to carve out a career, and instead wants to live a peaceful life...

"Essentially, you need Hanbei to succeed in life for the reputation of the clan."

"Hanbei is one of best onmyouji in Japan, but because ' in terms of military prowess, she is even better than her lord, Saitou Yoshitatsu' many of the retainers in the Saitou clan question whether it is wise to keep an aide with such unknown powers."

"In addition, because I used to be known as 'The Viper's Right-Hand', I'm now considered 'unpredictable', so trust has become an issue. Occasionally, there were even rumors that I was using Hanbei's strength to capture Mino too."

"What? Aren't you the cause of half of Hanbei's bad rumors!?"

"Indeed. Tomorrow, that child will move out to Inabayama for the first time. But because of the situation, I do not have retainers to serve her; even her steed is but a weak, old horse. With all that has happened, I have all the more reason to see that she is not belittled; she must look decent and dignified at the very least, and have elite warriors there to protect her at all times..."

"So that's why you're in such a hurry to find retainers, isn't it, Oji-san?"

"Indeed. Hopefully, we can find a hero who will not hesitate to cut Yoshitatsu down, despite any circumstances."

"Oji-san, this kind of dangerous speech is what caused you to be known as an unpredictable terrorist, isn't it?"

"In the end, it's just a precaution. But..... You Owari warriors, I can't help but worry about your skills with the arquebus."

Yoshiharu's chopsticks fell on the floor.

"How did you know that we are from Owari?"

"That arquebus and your clothes are both foreign to Mino. It is obvious you two are from Owari."

"What good eyes you have, Oji-san. I guess the interview is hopeless now, right?"

"Nope. I'll choose both of you then."

"For real?"

"I'm very interested in the way you guys spend money . Strength is important, but the power of money cannot be underestimated either. Dousan-dono had been emphasizing that a country's life or death will be decided by money."

Even though we had yet to see Hanbei, it seemed like this Ando Iga already decided to employ us in this tea shop.

"Well then, let me take you to Hanbei."

Somehow or other becoming Hanbei's retainers, the two of them were led by Ando Iga towards Hanbei's room, deep inside.

"Odd. Isn't this plan going way too smoothly? Might this Ando-oji-san have already figured out that we're under Nobuna?"

Is it a trap, or does he plan to ally with both the Oda clan and the Saitou clan? No matter which is it, at the moment they have nothing nothing at all unless they are able to negotiate with Hanbei directly.

Inuchiyo gently pulled Yoshiharu's sleeve, her expression full of “...weird”.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Let's go, Inuchiyo. "

After gently ushering Inuchiyo by patting her butt, they proceeded in.

Inside the house—— A handsome young merchant was sitting there in seiza position.

"Hmm, why do I feel like I've seen this face before?"

"What! Asai Nagamasa?!"

"You damned saru?! Why are you here!?"

No one predicted that these two Saru, one from Owari and the other from Omi, would meet each other here.

"Wah Wah, this is bad," Inuchiyo exclaimed while munching on her food.

"I...I escaped from the Oda clan and am ready to serve Hanbei-dono today! With this, I can finally say goodbye

to the days where that idiotic princess Nobuna would threaten to chop my head off or use her sandals to stomp on my face! Hehe~!"

"I see... By the way, I am not Asai Nagamasa. I'm just an ordinary merchant of the Masuichi clan from Omi named 'Saruyashamaru'. Our clan makes a living by selling medicine and was able to save up a bit. But now my brothers have all left home to find their own way of life, and as the eldest son, I have decided to serve Takenaka-sama."

"Liar. You think you're Mitoki Komon[9]? And all that rubbish about selling medicine for a living. You're just Asai Nagamasa, right!?"

"I am not this Asai person. You must be mistaken."

"Like hell I am! If you're not Asai, how could a merchant from Omi recognize my face?!"

"How could I not know you. The rumor about the exotic monkey 'Sagara' in Owari has long since traveled far and wide."

"Tch! Go on and spread your lies then!"

Ando Iga, noticing the situation and quickly pulling Yoshiharu and Nagamasa apart before they came to blows, said, "The wealthy Saruyashamaru-sama and the extravagant Owari ronin, Yoshiharu-dono and Inuchiyo-dono, I had decided to let you three serve under Hanbei together."

"Wait a minute Oji-san! You're definitely picking the candidates by wealth! From the start, all you've been talking about is money!

"......You're thinking too much."

"And that guy over there is the Omi daimyo, Asai Nagamasa! This bastard is full of malicious plans, even now god knows what he is thinking up! How can you hire such a person!?"

Asai Nagamasa merely laughed.

"Where's the proof? In fact, aren't you also lying about running away from the Oda clan? How are you going to prove that you are not actually under Nobuna's orders to assassinate Hanbei-sama, Saru-dono?"

"Che~! You scumbag! Nobuna would never use such an underhanded method like assassination!"

"Who knows? Hanbei-sama's tactics seems to be a big headache for Nobuna-dono. She might feel pushed into a corner by the marriage with the Asai clan and attempt an assassination plan."

POW!

Without noticing his rage meter has exploded, Yoshiharu lashed out his fist towards the leering Nagamasa, but the latter easily dodged that and the punch goes straight through the pillar instead.

"Ahhhh! My Fist! My Fist!!! AHHHHHH!"

".....Yoshiharu. Relax."

"Now, let me chase away these poor ronins. These poor people only know how to eat; there is absolutely no worth in employing them. Just wait for a while, Hanbei will be here soon."

It seems like Ando Iga did not really care about the fuss in the house and started to walk towards the corridor.

"Oh yeah. If you guys treasure your life, don't ever anger Hanbei. Otherwise even I cannot guarantee your life and safety."

It's almost as if he totally didn't care that Saruyashamaru was Asai Nagamasa; in fact, he seemed to welcome the fact.

"I really don't understand that old man... As if the Oda and Saito clans were not enough, he is even adding the Asai clan into the mix. Don't tell me he is really planning to sell Hanbei to the highest bidder!?"

"....Our mutual poking of each others intentions ends here, Saru." Nagamasa whispered over.

This bastard, even though he's obviously male, how could his body emit out such a fragrance? He must have been wearing women's clothing and used aromatic oil in the process.

Hmph. No matter what, he is an obstacle to my great ' Harem Plan'. Yoshiharu unconsciously let out a "Tch".

"Saru, our objectives are the same, right? Both of us wanna pull Hanbei over... So instead of fighting each

other, why don't we just play our roles as the Omi merchant and the Owari ronin?"

"Nagamasa, for someone of your caliber, that's not a bad idea. I guess I'll just follow that then....However, I'll be the one to win Hanbei over! Speaking of which, you have to lower yourself to this level just to conquer Mino before Nobuna? Now that's rather shallow of you."

"For someone like me, when I set my eyes on cities or women, I will definitely conquer them. From this point, Nobuna-dono is no exception. Instead of relying on some dirty monkey who can only do stupid things to delay the marriage, she can just hide behind me and live a more comfortable life."

"Inuchiyo, lend me your spear. I think I should just pierce this bastard to death right here."

".....Yoshiharu. Be tolerant here."

Just as the three were staring at each other and quarreling,

"Nice to meet you. I am... Takenaka Hanbei Shigetora."

Just when did this person appear in front of us?

In the seat in middle of the room, a pale and tall man was lying motionlessly.

"WAAAAAAAAAA!!! That scared me !!!"

"Even I was unable to detect this person... When did he get here?"

".....I was careless."

Takenaka Hanbei finally appeared.

There isn't much difference in his looks from the Sengoku games.

As for the age, he should be around 30 years old.

Those fox-like eyes really go well with the whole onmyouji look as well.

His skin was snow white, and a light yellow silk shirt was wrapped around his thin build while a stole was draped across his shoulders.

Under the body, there were two horned Yano Kabuto[10].

That is the helmet of a military adviser——Takenaka Hanbei's trademark armor.

Even being surrounded by the trio (Yoshiharu, Inuchiyo and Nagamasa), Hanbei did not look concerned and maintained his sleeping position.

"My name is Sagara Yoshiharu. The one with a tiger skin on his head is my younger brother, Inuchiyo."

".....YOUNGER•SISTER•INUCHIYO..."

"I am the heir to my clan in Omi, Saruyashamaru. However..... my sources told me that Hanbei-sama is female..."

"Mhmm mhmm mhmm. Just as you see, I'm just a handsome young man, though I'm not as young as you three. It seems that I've disappointed you, Asai Nagamasa-dono."

"Argh. I'm exposed from the start, huh?"

Nagamasa gnashed his teeth. He must have thought that with his looks, he would be able to charm Hanbei. Which is why he did not hesitate to come personally to Mino's Inokuchi in the first place.

However, there is another man who is grinding his teeth as well.

"Grrrr! I get it now Nagamasa! You must always visit other clans and seduce the women of the family to expand your territory, right!?"

"Not Nagamasa but Saruyashamaru. I did not lie or trick anyone. Any girl under my embrace is going to feel happy and blissful——Don't place me in the same category as some monkey who will be beheaded for even fantasizing about hugging Nobuna-dono."

"Shut up you bastard! If you dare hug Nobuna, I'll be the first to kill you!"

"And besides, any woman that I kiss will drift to paradise."

"Inuchiyo, lend me your spear! If I don't fight it out with this bastard, I'm not Sagara!"

"Can you people hold your little dispute over Nobuna for somewhere else on a later date?" Hanbei, who's still lying down asked.

Although he had entered very elegantly, it looked like this person is just plain lazy.

"You're right, Hanbei. But before talking, can you get up first?"

"I'll be ok lying down. Standing up is such a hassle and besides, this position is good for my health."

"Why does this guy sound like some pretty face character from a BL game?" Yoshiharu cannot help but mutter it out.

Nagamasa observed the situation in silence and sat down quietly in a corner. It is possible that he was thinking of another way to win over Hanbei.

"My three guests, thanks for not minding the long distance and venturing all the way here to Inokuchi. Why don't you guys relax and have some tea first?"

Hanbei clapped his hands with difficulty and a beautiful villager came into the room, and placed a plate full of dango in front of the trio. A pair of wolf-like ears can be seen with a flick of her head.

"Woah...that wolf-eared girl sure is cute."

"......(anger) Compared to wolves, dogs are definitely cuter."

"That child is my Shikigami[11], 'Goki'."

"Shikigami? You mean the legendary Shikigami that Abe no Seimei uses?"

"Precisely. To be able to know our ancestor, Seimei-sama's history, Sagara-sama sure is full of surprises."

"Haha... It's just that Abe no Seimei is a very popular subject in my world."

Upon closer inspection, the dangos that was served by the girl has a thick layer of something on it: Hatcho Miso.

In addition, the cups were filled with hot simmering tea. It seems delicious.

"This is my favorite snack, Hidan's special dango. Hidan's rice doesn't taste good so it is turned into dangos . It is very popular in Mino as well," Hanbei proudly told the trio.

"And Inabayama castle is a place where it is hard to get fresh water. In order to conserve water during a siege , instead of cooking rice, we use rice by molding them into dangos, that's our way of storing food."

"Man...the way you say it makes me real thirsty! Itadakimasu!"

"......Dango...looks good. I'll try."

The beautiful girl had retreated from the room without a word, Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo became engrossed with the tea and dango not unlike ants on sweets.

As someone who despises Miso added dishes, Nagamasa said "Miso dangos are a bit....." and started to frown. Why do people like to add such bitter tasting miso to these sweet dangos? It was totally incomprehensible.

"Nagamasa, come and eat a few too! It's so tasty, simply delicious! This tea too; though it's a bit hot, the heat is totally fitting to a stomach that was just filled with lunch!"

"....Yeah, Yeah. Miso-dangos, though a little bitter, it's tasty!"

Though people were calling Takenaka Hanbei a famous weirdo who looked like a fox on first glance, he seemed like a nice fellow. If I suggest straight out to him to join the Oda clan, he might just agree to it.

Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo nodded with a silly smiling face.

But...

"Gahahahahahahaha!"

As Yoshiharu who was shouting "Tasty, tasty!" and kept refilling his cup, and Inuchiyo who was stuffing her face full of dangos, were looking at each other while smiling silly, Hanbei broke into an uncontrollable laughing fit.

Suddenly, his face broke into pieces, and his mouth widened like a demon.

Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo, including Nagamasa's brain couldn't keep up with the development.

"Hahahaha, and I was expecting something more from the Owari warriors who broke through my 'Ambush

from all sides' and 'Stone Sentinel Maze'. In the end they fell for such a low level prank, how dumb is this! Hohoho!"

"Oi, Hanbei's face completely changed into a fox face? Inuchiyo, how scary!"

"....."

While they regained their senses, Hanbei totally changed into a fox. His face had already grown a mustache and he grew a tail. From his half opened mouth, one can see some sharp fangs.

Somehow or other, the two had hugged each other in fear.

"Demons!"

Nagamasa unsheathed his sword from his waist in reflex.

"Prprprprprprprprank? Do-do-do-don't tell me that the tea and dango was poisoned?"

"....Now that you mention it.....My stomach...hurts... Yoshiharu!"

"Me too, I feel disgusted somehow.....! And my mouth has a weird taste.....!"

"It's just a prank, no poisons involved."

The fox-Hanbei laughed and stood up.

"It's just an illusion from the Onmyoudou, what you guys just drank is actually horse piss. As for the "miso" on the dango, those were horse dung."

Cough

"*Retching noises*~! What the hell did you just let us drink?!"

".....eaten too much.....Inuchiyo should just commit seppuku and die."

"Calm down, Inuchiyo. Now is not the time to commit seppuku but to vomit out all the dangos."

".....such humiliation, how can I live and go back to see Hime-sama?"

"Keep calm and avoid indirect kisses with Nobuna temporarily."

"*Retching noises*.... No, I can't vomit it out."

"Good.....It's a good thing I did not eat the dangos...." The visibly shaken Nagamasa let out a cry of relief in his heart.

"Hohohoho."

"You dare do such a thing! Now I'm angry!"

With an unconcerned face, the fox-Hanbei suddenly sneered with an unbelievably long tongue and said, "Oh, coming here to pull my master to your clans, and now you want to kill me? Don't make me laugh."

"Che....."

"Sagara Yoshiharu, Asai Nagamasa. If you guys can finish up these shit dango and beg me, leaving the Saitou clan to your side is still a possibility. What do you guys think?"

Nagamasa started to stutter and mumble.

"I...I...I...I... er... Hmmm.... If I eat those, both Nobuna and Owari will be mine. But..... I hate miso.....this is too.... .."

"But wait. Both Miso and horse dung are similar in the way they ferment. So as to say, even though they are rotten, people can still eat them. The difference is only the timing they rot. If I think of it from this way..... How the hell can they be the same!!! I...I...I.....Hmmmmmm..."

Nagamasa looked at the bunch of shit dango and perspires profusely, while falling into a loop of thoughts.

Yoshiharu was thinking while making retching noises.

"Since I have already eaten so much..... No giving up at this point..... B...but, I know it's shit now..... If I put it into my mouth, all is over.....!"

So now, who will be the one who agrees to eat these shit dangos for Nobuna?

The ultimate choice!

Sob....

"Hmph! How can I lose to the Owari Saru..... Here I go! "

For his own ambitions, the Nagamasa who made up his mind takes up the dangos and opens his mouth!

Yoshiharu isn't hesitating and followed suit!

"Che! If I lose here, Nobuna will be marrying this bastard....."

Just throw away the honour of the samurai and the dignity of a man and eat these dangos; after that all we have to do is to kneel and beg this idiotic fox-Hanbei..... That's all, that's all to it.

Forced to eat shit by his opponent/demon and beg for him, what kind of a man am I!? But...But...But...If I don't do as he says, Nobuna will...Nobuna will...! Argh! I'm going all in!

Inuchiyo, looking at the hesitating Yoshiharu, gripped her spear tightly and suddenly thrust her spear towards Hanbei's chest.

".....Hya!"

Ka-chak!

With a shrill scream, the fox Hanbei did some somersaults due to the spear thrusts and fell out the window.

"What have you done!" Throwing away the dango in his hand, Nagamasa rushed to the side of Fox-Hanbei.

"He...He's not breathing.....! You two, as expected, your motive is to assassinate Hanbei, right!?"

"No!"

"In-in-in-in-inuchiyo, you stabbed someone to death, what should we do now?!"

".....opponent is a demon.....and no matter how you think of Hime-sama, I do not want to see Yoshiharu eat shit-dango and lower his head to others."

"But.....!"

".....Yoshiharu"

"What?!"

"For a samurai, even if you lower your head to someone, you must always be clear of the situation. Even

if you lower your head, you should not feel inferior, and you should never give up your dignity. If you break these two points, Yoshiharu isn't a samurai. The Yoshiharu just now lost himself due to his worry for Hime-sama!"

The still red face Inuchiyo spewed out some rarely heard long sentences, and continued with another thrust at Hanbei.

"Though what you said is correct, from what I see, you're just fuming with anger over him who bluffed you into eating a big bunch of shit dangos, right?"

"......That's an illusion."

"And you specifically checked if he is dead or not, how deep is your hatred?!"

"......You're thinking too much."

"What to do now? We can't possibly run back to Nobuna now and tell her we disguised ourselves as ronin and killed Hanbei. Nobuna's reputation will drop to the ground..."

"Wa....Crap...."

"Though I do not need to eat those shit dangos because of you guys, it's a pity that I have seen everything. Allow me to tell all the provinces about this," Nagamasa said.

"Not good, Inuchiyo! Hurry, try and re... revive Ha... Ha...Hanbei!"

"Hey, Hanbei-dono. *Poke* *Poke* *Poke*"

……

……

……

".....no reaction from poking. Just like a corpse."

"He is just...just...just faking sleep[12]! How can an omnyouji like him die so easily?"

"......Fox, faking sleep. Masterpiece, hehehehe"

"Now is not the time to laugh!"

"......Yoshiharu, run away with Inuchiyo. How about going to Kyoto and doing gag shows?"

"Naive! You are underestimating Kyoto's gags! It's still 10 years too early!"

".....Wa....."

What should we do now.

Inuchiyo and Yoshiharu hugged each other and sat down in a daze.

Nagamasa said to himself "No, if this goes on, I will be counted as one of the culprits assassinating Hanbei!" and started to panic.

But just when the trio regained their senses, the corpse of Fox-Hanbei in front of them disappeared like a mirage . What remained was just a small flower, lying on the tatami.

"Ah, huh? What is going on, Inuchiyo? Where's Hanbei?"

"......strange. There are no blood traces on the tatami.

"Found him, here!"

The room has one more person!

Asai Nagamasa pulled a dagger out from near his chest gallantly and threw it to a pillar deep in the room.

"......Ah.....Please....Please, don't...don't...don't bully me. ....."

It seems like she is frightened stiff.

From the shadow of the pillar, a small girl is rolling over to the legs of Yoshiharu.

She is a girl even more delicate and petite than Inuchiyo.

Big black eyes, and long eyelashes, she's a young girl that gives people the "just like a small squirrel" feeling.

"......Please don't bully me.....sob, sob....."

Just as Yoshiharu reflexively said "It's ok, no one here will bully you", the small girl who is just crying pulled the famed dagger "Toragozen" our from her waist and swung it right between Yoshiharu's eyebrows.

With his dodging skills that can be compared to those in American spy movies, Yoshiharu managed to avoid it. But Yoshiharu couldn't stop but scream with fear, and his pants seem a bit wet.....

"Woahhhhhh?! Dangerous!!!!"

~Shiver~ The small girl in front of them rolled herself into a ball, her fear of them seems to have increased.

".....Sob...Sob...As...As expected, you people will bully me..... You guys will definitely bully me..... Sob...Sob...."

"Not at all, we won't bully you! So please stop with the sneak attacks!"

"Loud... A loud man.... Terrifying, gonna... gonna get bullied..... Sob...Sob...."

"Ahhh, sorry about it, it's my fault. I'm not angry at all ~ I will always stand by your side~ So don't be afraid, come, let me wipe your tears..... To prove that we are good, I'll return this dagger to you ~, hold on to it~. "

There is something creepy about Yoshiharu's tone, Inuchiyo narrowed her eyes.

"Why are you looking at me like I did something wrong?"

".....You even prey on little children, not caring about the time and place."

"You think too much!"

".....Sob....Hanbei, 14 years old now....."

"See, Inuchiyo, Hanbei-chan is a grown-up lady[13] here."

".....Lei....di....?

"Sob.... Thank....you"

"So please don't cry while flinging daggers at me..."

Inuchiyo said "It's dangerous" and took away the dagger from the girl.

".....This dagger is the famed blade 'Toragozen'. This child is the real Takenaka Hanbei," Inuchiyo said while nodding her head.

Yoshiharu and Nagamasa regained their senses and let out a shriek.

"Ehhhhh? This snot-nosed girl is the real Hanbei? The one who outsmarts Nobuna all the time....."

"The world renowned military adviser, Takenaka Hanbei? How unbelievable."

Though Inuchiyo said that, in truth Yoshiharu is still in doubt. It's true that this pale girl is similar to the history's Hanbei who was also sickly in health, but is this really true? Is this sobbing young child really the one who devised the horrible "Ambush from all sides" and "Stone Sentinel Maze"?

Nagamasa is thinking *That commoner-faced Saru seems more capable with small kids. If that's the case, will I able to pull Hanbei over before Saru does?* while Yoshiharu was thinking *Damn, this kid is even harder to deal with than Nene* and was patting Hanbei's head in a panic to reduce her wariness.

"Your hand movements are getting more and more creepy," Inuchiyo mumbled.

"*Sob* I won't be naughty anymore. So please don't bully me..." *Piak*

"Nya, stop pasting strange talismans on my forehead!"

"Takenaka Hanbei's Kagemusha (substitute) Zenki, has revived! Sagara-dono, prepare yourself." *Pinch*

"Oi, why is there a Shikigami suddenly?! Ouch, it hurts , damn it! Blood, blood is flowing out? My neck is bleeding now!!!!!"

"See... You became angry in the end. As expected, you are angry." *Sobsobsob*

"What the hell!!! You are the one who is making me angry, ok!?"

~cries~

"Hmmm! For the crime of making my master cry, you will pay with your life! I pinch!!!"

"Wa...Wait wait wait! If this goes on, I will really die due to blood loss..... Inuchiyo, help me!!!"

".....being bullied by such a small child yet having such a blissful face, Yoshiharu, you really are perverted."

"Oh, Hanbei. This guy is your new aide! He's not here to bully you! You can't use your Shikigami and be rude to him."

"No mercy to anyone who makes Hanbei cry, let me kill you!" Yoshiharu's scream reverberated throughout the room, the whole scene looks just like hell.

After dispersing the ronins from the shop, Ando Iga came over frantically.

"I'm so sorry, Sagara-dono! This child has been sickly, cowardly and childish since she was young. Because of the combination of these three characteristics, people bully her! Whenever she first meets someone, she will always use her onmyouji and scams to test if they are easily angered.

"No one will remain calm after being messed up like that! Hey, geezer, stop staring and come up with a solution now!"

~Crying~ "He's angry, he's fuming mad now...."

"How dare you make my master cry? This crime is only punishable by death!"

"So noisy."

"Why not just let this monkey die. With this Nobuna-dono will....."

"Guys! There will definitely be people who will have jealous thoughts towards Hanbei, who finally became Saitou's strategist! Please try your best and protect Hanbei so her move to Inabayama castle for her first day of work goes smoothly!"

"Compared to that, I'm more afraid of being bullied to death by Hanbei!"

"This weak adviser can't possibly be the real Hanbei." Yoshiharu, while fighting desperately with the Shikigami , thought of his own future and let out a deep sigh.

The next morning.

Hanbei and her aides climbed Mount Inaba, also known as Kinkazan. The mountain was given this nickname because of how the whole mountain is colored

golden by the flowers when the seasons rolled around and the beech flowers bloom.

Saitou Yoshitatsu's castle, Inabayama Castle, is a gigantic fortress that utilizes the approximately 330-meter tall Mount Inaba as a natural shield. The Nagara river flows at the north side, while in the east stands Megumiyama and Kiso Mitakesan. In the west, Kinkazan , Ibukiyama, Yorozan and Suzukayama, all provide a wall of mountains. At the south of Mount Inaba, the town acts as the first defense line against the Owari army .

The most important feature of Kinkazan and Mount Inaba was their very steep slopes. They can easily be compared to Kyoto's door of death, Hieizan.

"This castle has excellent geographical advantages. From the viewpoint of an onmyouji, the Inabayama Castle is fit to be the fortress of kings. Thinking of it this way, I can understand why Viper-dono and Oda Nobuna , who both had ambitions for the world, would want so desperately to conquer this point."

The one talking to the new aides and giving them the thoughts of an onmyouji, all while acting like a tour

guide, was Hanbei herself. Hanbei was lightly clothed to the point of not even wearing boots, and was adorned in her trademark-like silk clothing.

"Because boots are heavy, *sob*"

Hanbei was riding a horse, though it would probably be more fitting to call it a donkey; this horse is just too chibi. Her legs are closely straddling the horse, giving a standard look of a distinguished lady.

"Because big horses are scary, *sob*"

"No matter how delicate you are, as a warrior, its still embarrassing to ride like this," Yoshiharu mumbles, holding the reins of Hanbei's horse.

"Hanbei-chan, what do you mean by excellent geographical advantages?"

"Er..... If there is no river close to the town, the town won't be able to flourish for long due to water supply issues. If there are no mountains close by, it will increase the difficulty of defending. So for any fortress of kings, it must be a place with nearby rivers and mountains."

"I see, Onmyoudou is actually a knowledge which focuses heavily on feng shui," Yoshiharu nods while agreeing.

Because of her two Shikigamis Zenki and Gouki being too ridiculous, it's still a bit hard to accept. Yoshiharu even thought that all this might just be another illusion, but if that's the case, the bite marks on his neck will become another mystery.

"I'm really sorry for yes...yesterday. I'm already reflecting on it."

After glancing at the bandages around Yoshiharu's neck and giving out a "Ah!", she bowed down deeply and apologized to her three servants. Now who is the master and who is the servant?

"I...I...I have a history of being bullied... I am a masochistic child. (Omenko[14])"

"Oh.... So Hanbei-chan is masochistic.... Ehhhhhh!?"

"Ah! I'm sorry, sorry, sorry for being masochistic. *sob*
"

Looking at the extremely alarmed face of Yoshiharu, Inuchiyo explained that omenko means "introverted" in Mino dialect.

"Yes. That's why I had to see if you people would bully me in the first meeting.....Because I'm afraid of strangers.. ....*sob*"

"Ma.....Masochist???!?!!!"

"It's 'introvert' in Mino dialect," Inuchiyo stressed once again. ".....Yoshiharu seems to mishear it so perversely intentionally."

"Is...Is it!? Oh, it's a small thing actually! No problem since Hanbei-chan is so cute!" Yoshiharu said.

".....Yo...Yoshiharu-dono, you plan to dote on me.... Dote, so... so as to say, you wanna bully me harshly? You want to gather all the aides and push them over here? * Sobsob*"

"Push? It's not a sumo contest! It's not like that!"

"I'm wrong? Are you angry?"

"I'm not. But Hanbei-chan, since you have not been under the Saitou-clan until now, don't tell me there is a very terrifying person in Inabayama Castle?

"The previous head, Viper-dono is a very very very very scary person. *Sobsobsobsob*"

"I see. Yeah, that geezer seems scary when he's talking. "

"The new head, Yoshitatsu-sama is better compared to Viper-sama, but such a tall and big guy is still scary....."

"Don't be so strict on outer appearances."

"I'm sorry! ..... are you bullying me?"

"Who is bullying you!? Hanbei-chan, you should be afraid of going onto the battlefield. I didn't expect you to have the resolve to take up the advisor position."

".....Because there are two very scary people in Owari, Viper-sama and the sixth Maou Oda Nobuna. Once I think that these very scary people are going to invade Mino from Owari, I can't sleep from fear, so no matter what, I have to protect Mino..." *Sobsobsob*

"Ahh... So that's it..." Yoshiharu nods his head repeatedly.

".....Hime-sama and Viper, these two, their bad names are really over the top outside," Inuchiyo said.

"On the other hand, Asai Nagamasa from Omi is a friendly and strong warrior," Nagamasa stepped into the conversation too.

"Che... How can that sissy be a strong warrior?"

"Shut up, you shit eating monkey."

"You shut up, sissy Omi monkey."

"Both of you have such a good relationship," Inuchiyo mumbled.

"'Good' your ass!!!"

"Erm... Sagara-dono, Asai-dono. I will not go over to Owari or Omi..... If I betray Yoshitatsu-sama, I will definitely be hated and bullied.....especially when Owari has Viper-sama and Oda Nobuna; having a good relationship with them is definitely impossible..." * Sobsobsob*

"Damn, our motive has been exposed!" Yoshiharu started to panic.

"It's because of your big mouth, you Owari Monkey." Nagamasa grumbled.

"Okay, the problem for now is the bunch of people around Yoshitatsu-sama," Ando Iga grumbled while holding his back.

"Such a young Hanbei being promoted to the position of strategist, who knows what terrible things will happen ?"

"....*shocked*"

"Geezer, you're too careless with your words! Hanbei is scared now, isn't she?"

"Oh, yes, you're right. Sorry, Hanbei."

"It's ok, Uncle-sama. Because there are so many squirrels in Kinkazan.....So cute....." The small Hanbei said. For some time now, squirrels have been gathering on her head and knees.

"Morning, Squirrel-san. I've brought sunflower seeds for you guys. Squirrel-san won't bully me, I love them so much."

".....Hmmm. Inuchiyo wanna feed them too.....But they just don't come to me....."

"It's your fault for wearing that tiger hat. Which squirrel in the world will take food from a tiger?"

"....*shocked*"

"In the past, Viper-dono bought a bunch of squirrels as a source of food from overseas. After that, they ran away onto Kinkazan. Over the twenty-odd years, their numbers have grown quite a bit."

"Eating such cute squirrel-sans? So scary.....*sobsob*"

"Hanbei is starting to shiver again, Geezer!!!" Yoshiharu couldn't bear it and shouted at Ando Iga. This geezer really doesn't think things through.

".....at the summit already."

In this era, a fortress seldom has a Tenshukaku (Main Tower). The Lord of Mino, Saitou Yoshitatsu's living

quarters are in the middle of Kinkazan, a place known as "Ninomaru". It's a three story building designed personally by Viper, Saitou Dousan himself.

For Hanbei's group, today is the start of their first day of work. And for Mino, today is also the day they come up with an overall plan to defend against Owari.

Though Hanbei did cry and shout that "The castle has too many scary people", and refused to be at Inabayama Castle personally, her pleas are easily repelled by the reasoning "As the strategist, how can you not show your face?"

Saitou Yoshitatsu and his aides had been waiting for quite some time.

In fact, Yoshitatsu had now became wary of this weird strategist Hanbei who has twice repelled Owari's attacks with her "Ambush from all sides" and "Stone Sentinel Maze" tactics, and is having premonitions of danger for giving such a person total control over his troops.

"For this strategist Hanbei to be able to repel such a strong Owari army, though she is just a brat, could she be the manifestation of a monster?" Yoshitatsu felt a sense of fear creeping up from his heart.

In the audience is also a guy who had distanced himself from battles but is always coming up with schemes to do people in. The person named 'Saito Hidan Mamoru' had been advising Yoshitatsu, and is trying his best to remove Hanbei.

"First, aggravate Hanbei by insulting him, then force him to draw his 'Toragozen'. As long as Hanbei draws his weapon in the castle, it will all be over. Then all I need to do is label him a rebel and a criminal, then I let the samurais hiding close by finish him off."

"As for my master Yoshitatsu, all I need to do is follow the plan and say 'Hanbei plans to assassinate master'. After all, there is only one kind of person in the world who won't talk; a dead person."

"Hanbei has always been calm, so it won't be easy to make him angry. There must be a certain level of insult. If not, this plan won't succeed."

But this Saito Hidanmori had never set foot on the battlefield. He knew nothing about how Hanbei looked; rather, before you even mention looks, he assumed that Hanbei was male from just the name.

Now.....

Hanbei had just reached Inabayama castle was walking cautiously to the castle gates. At that instant, Hidanmori who is guarding the gates stands up calmly and grabs a howling dog. Right after that, the pee from the dog sprays onto Hanbei's little face.

"Know some shame, you idiots who only know how to flatter!"

".....Uwwwaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Hanbei was shocked at the sudden turn of events and after getting told off by Hidanmori, tears start to gather around her eyelids.

The squirrel named "Hanbei" started to cry out loud.

Hidanmori is also shocked at the scene in front of him, "Eh? A...A girl?! And it's just a kid.....?" Knowing that he has done something irreconcilable, Hidanmori shouted with a pale face "No, it's not like that! I'm not a pervert who gets excited seeing a bishoujo X dog pee" and rushed out from the castle gates while still shouting.

"What, what happened?" Yoshitatsu and his people had started to gather after hearing the noise, and witness Hanbei's half wet look. She was originally already a legendary bishoujo; adding in her current wet clothing and her face full of tears, Hanbei's current look stirred up the guys innate protective desires.

"Oh, isn't that Hanbei-dono?"

"Been bullied, huh?"

"Eh? Why are you wet?"

"Th...Th...Th...The clothes have became see-through."

"It looks like the dog peed on her."

The guys' breath started to get heavier and faster.....

"If this goes on, she will catch a cold. Let me wipe her body."

"No, let me!"

"Shut up! Here you should let me, the master of Mino, Saitou Yoshitatsu change her clothes and wipe her body, then console her by patting her on the head!"

These guys's lolicon souls are burning brightly!

"What the hell? Why do we meet lolicons so frequently nowadays!? And they even have a pee fetish!" Yoshiharu yelled out, unable to bear the scene.

"......Sob....Sob....Sobsob.... I....I...I...I've been bullied."

Hanbei was getting confused now; that's the real crisis!

Yoshiharu, Nagamasa and Inuchiyo were scared stiff by this turn of events and couldn't move at all.

"Damn it! Hanbei is going bonkers! Guys, don't let her go berserk!" Before Ando Iga can even finish speaking, Hanbei shouted "Don't bully me!!!", grabbed a talisman and started to dance.

"Hmmm! To cleanse my master from the humiliation, Zenki pays his respects!"

"To give divine punishment to the perverts of Mino, Gouki pays his respects!"

Following right behind the fox and wolf pair Zenki and Gouki, all kinds of never before seen Shikigami began to appear from Hanbei's magic formation.

"The Twelve Heavenly Guards, Snake pays his respects."

"The Twelve Heavenly Guards, Phoenix pays his respects."

"Rikugo pays his respects."

"Kouchin pays his respects."

"The Azure Dragon pays his respects."

"The Bourgeoisie pays his respects."

"Night"

"Day"

"Genbu, the black tortoise."

"Great Couture"

"Shirotora"

"Great Sky"

Hanbei threw all the talismans in her hand, and the number of Shikigami she had summoned has reached a never before seen number of 14!!!

From the state of full throttle lolicon power, all of a sudden terrifying ghosts started appearing in front of Yoshitatsu and his men, prompting their screams "It's out !", "Takenaka Hanbei has rebelled!", and "Inabayama castle has been assaulted from within!"

"Demon arts, run for your lives!"

"No, I just want to pat my adviser's head as the province master!"

Everyone ran back into the building.

"Stop, we barely made an appearance! Hmmmm!"

"They ran like whipped dogs just from seeing us Shikigamis, what a bunch of cowards!"

Zenki and Gouki chased after Yoshitatsu and his minions making the whole Inabayama castle a complete mess. When they came back to their senses, they found that the Mino soldiers in Inabayama castle had all ran away, leaving Hanbei's party and her Shikigami army.

"Eh? Does this means the fortress belongs to us now? Good job, Hanbei!"

Hanbei and her party walked into the now deserted castle, planning for a rest, and only at this time Ando Iga realised the fact that "Inabayama castle has been conquered".

A small brat just conquered a whole fortress by making a fuss and crying? Hanbei shivered with fear after noticing the dreadful situation.

"I...I...I...I did...did not plan to do this...Ah...Ahhhh. If I re...re...rebel, I'll be bullied... *sobsobsob* *Achoo*"

"With how things are going now, it can't be helped. For now, just change your clothes before you catch a cold !"

"......Yoshiharu, don't blame the dog."

"Hanbei-dono, it's an undisputed fact that you have claimed the fortress from your master's hands, even if it was unintentional. Can you give this Inabayama castle to me, Asai Nagamasa? Of course, I will not bully you. I can even swear now, as long as I Saruyashamaru still draw breath, you will be protected from bad people who bully you even if that's the last thing I do."

Nagamasa suddenly held Hanbei's little hands and spoke non-stop. He's the best when it comes to situations like this.

"Now just stop right there, Nagamasa! What do you mean by "I will protect you in this life of mine." Didn't you already propose to Nobuna?"

"Stop trying to make a mess, Saru! As a Sengoku daimyo, having a harem is totally normal. Besides, my love is unlimited. My love won't dry up even if there is a couple more girls."

"Damn you, didn't you say shitty things like 'Though I don't love you, it's for the sake of political marriage.'"

"Damn Saru, just how stupid are you. Don't tell me you know nothing about the creatures called women?"

Nagamasa gives off an expression of triumph, and softly whisper to Yoshiharu's ears. "To a realistic person like me and Nobuna-dono, one who has their eyes for the world's conquest, using logic is most effective, like saying 'For the sake of your biggest dream, forsake the little hopes you have'. But, Hanbei-dono and Nobuna-dono are totally opposite, so professing 'An everlasting love' is most likely be able to move her heart."

"You bastard, you just mix your words to whatever benefits you the most using that sinister mouth of yours, huh?"

"That's right. It's ok as long as I say the things the other party wants to hear. That's the trick to being loved by women."

"Oh shit.....Saru, this is all your fault!"

"Hanbei-chan, never get deceived by this sissy's flattering words! Oi Nagamasa, get your ass away from Hanbei-chan now!"

"You bastard; you plan on stopping me, huh? At this moment, if I get my hands on Inabayama castle, Nobuna-dono will definitely marry me to get Mino.

"That's exactly reason I'm trying to stop you, get it?"

"How many times do you want me to say it, Saru? For a small-time soldier like you, marrying a princess from the daimyo family is not even a slightly possible. It's like a toad trying to eat a swan, it's all bullshit."

Grrrr.....!

Yoshiharu's whole body is red all of a sudden.

"I...I...I...I...I really feel that who No...No...No...Nobuna marries is totally not my concern! Bu...But Nagamasa, I just don't like you! You see girls as tools for you to get ahead in life! Are you still fit to be a guy!?"

"Oh..... You came all the way here to persuade Hanbei, all because you don't like the way I treat girls indifferently? What a brat-like statement, but it fits your character after all."

"Grrrr....Inuchiyo! Lend me your spear, I will definitely finish this today with this marriage deceiving criminal."

"*Sobsob* I know both of you are here for Oda Nobuna , but please stop fighting..... And the fight isn't even about me....." Hanbei eyes start to fill with tears again.

"No. I honestly don't love Nobuna-dono, but my love for you, Hanbei-dono, is the truth!"

"Oi, Nagamasa! Who are you trying to bluff with such obvious lies?"

"Hmmm! 'I have nothing to do with Nobuna.' Who said this kind of idiotic thing, huh? By stopping me from taking Nobuna-dono away, you are real culprit who played with Hanbei-dono's heart."

"I can't take it! When have I played around with Hanbei-chan!?"

"Aren't you letting Hanbei-dono miss a chance at happiness?"

"That's why I said, what makes you think you can give Hanbei-chan happiness! There is only Inabayama castle and Nobuna in your head now."

"These two guys can't settle down unless they fight it out....." Inuchiyo grumbled.

Hanbei said once again "I will not go with any of you."

"I will never do such a thing like betraying. To solve this misunderstanding, I must let Yoshitatsu-sama return to Inabayama castle, and I will retire and go back to Bodaisen."

"That is impossible, Yoshitatsu and his people will not return because of your Shikigamis," Nagamasa said.

"Now is not the time to be indecisive. If you follow that Saru to Owari, the terrifying Viper and Nobuna who will be waiting for you with watering mouths, not to mention there will be a shitty monkey harassing you everyday. But if you follow me to Omi, I, Saruyashamaru , will definitely protect you; which is better? I do not think you need to consider anymore."

Just as Nagamasa planned to pull Hanbei, he met the just returning Zenki and Gouki, and with their "This fellow is obviously lying", "Suspicious fellow", Nagamasa had to give up.

With so many interfering people around, there is really no way for Nagamasa to pull Hanbei over to his side.

After saying "I have something to say to Ando-sama", Nagamasa dragged the totally drunk Ando Iga who is

saying "No matter if it's Omi or Owari, Hanbei has became a fortress owner now. I should just drink till I'm full now" and left the building.

"Am I wrong in being so cowardly?" Hanbei let out a voice of concern and collapsed onto the tatami. As the rumors had said, Hanbei's constitution was really weak. She seemed to have a fever now.

"Achoo! *Sobsob* .....So...So cold..."

"......Inuchiyo will bring her a shower. Yoshiharu, do not peek!"

"I...I will not do such a thing!"

"......haven't you been peeking at Katsuie while she's showering?"

"I...I said I'm not peeking! Though it's correct that I have an enormous interest in those ever swaying breasts of hers!"

Yoshiharu was swiftly knocked on the head by the fuming Inuchiyo with her spear, collapsing unconscious onto the ground.

……

"Hmmm? When did I faint? It's already night?"

The first thing that the freshly rebooted Yoshiharu did was to rush to the courtyard, but the sun had already gone down, and there is nothing before him but darkness .

In such a dark and windy night, Inuchiyo and Hanbei's small faces suddenly appeared in front of him without a sound, triggering Yoshiharu to scream " Wahhhhh".

".....Yoshiharu, it's still too early to be stunned. We have not reported to you anything yet."

"*sobsob* Just when I collapsed due to fever..... Uncle Ando he..."

".....was lured away by Asai Nagamasa."

"WHAT!?"

Inuchiyo is holding up a letter, and the letter is of Nagamasa's handwriting. In summary, it went something like this: "Because of some monkey's

interference, I can't portray my love to you, so I hope you can forgive me for my disrespect. If you want Ando Iga to be returned safely, please meet me without the monkey's interference. The time limit is tonight at 4:30, at the middle of Nagara river, Sunomata. If you come here, I will definitely return your uncle in one piece."

Though disguised as an invitation, it's obviously nothing short of a ransom letter.

"Nagamasa that bastard, going for another way, now he has finally shown his true colors! Hanbei-chan, please do not go alone! If you do, you will be the one who is lured away and captured next!"

Sobsob

".....Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo will go to Sunomata and defeat Nagamasa.

Anyway Inuchiyo, not mentioning about that geezer being the hostage now, brought up another issue:

"....Yes, it's dangerous if we meet an ambush in the night."

Suddenly, Yoshiharu smacked his thighs and said excitedly.

"Ah! Yes, didn't Hanbei-chan have the strongest Shikigami army!? Just use the Shikigamis and this can be finished in no time!"

sobsob "It's impossible now....." Hanbei shook her small head.

"Ehhhhh?" Yoshiharu is stunned on the spot.

"Onmyoujis need to setup formations when summoning Shikigamis or doing the stone sentinel maze. As an Onmyouji, by right I should be well equipped with the talismans to set up such a formation."

"Hanbei-chan, don't tell me you....."

"Yes, during this morning's fuss, I used all of them unintentionally....."

"If so, how about Zenki?"

"Once the talismans wears off, they will all disappear. Without the talisman, it is impossible to resummon the Shikigamis."

"Just us will be dangerous....." Inuchiyo chipped in and said.

"How do we get those.... Er, wrong, how do we obtain those talismans?"[15]

"The pentagram seal only needs to be drawn onto the talisman itself, but to successfully summon a Shikigami, it's a must to go to the Seimei shrine to input spiritual energy in it."

"The Seimei shrine..... is...isn't that in Kyoto?"

"*Cough* The shrine's headquarters is in Kyoto, but there are actually several smaller shrines spread out in Japan. All the different shrines aren't just for worshiping Abe Seimei; they are actually places for onmyoujis to train, input their spiritual power and exchange information."

"Hmmm. So the Seimei shrines are your refueling stations. And you have different branches all around in Japan."

"Just ignore Yoshiharu's foreign ramblings," Inuchiyo said.

"Mino's Seimei shrine is at Ogaki. Though it's true that it's near my hometown, Bodaisen."

"Ogaki? Wait, why do I feel like I've heard about this place before?"

"About Ogaki, I remember in the Sengoku SLG's famed work *"The ambition of Oda Nobunaga"*, there is an Ogaki castle in west Mino." Yoshiharu's sengoku gaming knowledge is starting to spin again.

Though Ogaki is in Mino's territory, and is near Sekigahara, it's actually closer to Omi. It's not a place that we can reach in a span of hours.

And besides, Nagamasa's place, Sunomata is actually close to the foot of the mountain.

"Hanbei-chan, am I right to say we do not have time to go to Ogaki's Seimei shrine?"

"Yes. If we factor in Asai-dono's deadline, there is no time if we go to Seimei shrine and back."

"But even if it's like this, I can't let you risk it alone. Worst case scenario, we will just have to try something with the three of us.

"......if that's the case, won't this fortress be just an empty fortress, Yoshiharu-san. If Yoshitatsu-sama knows about it, he will definitely lead troops to conquer it back...ummm...is that really ok.....?"

"How....." Inuchiyo frowned and mumbled.

"Sagara-shi...Sagara-shi"

At that moment, from the floorboards of the room came a familiar voice with a bit of stuttering.

Yoshiharu and Hanbei retreated a few steps, and a small head appears from the floorboards.

"It's you, Goemon. If you were here, don't let Ando-jii-san get kidnapped away."

"I...I'm dishonored. I... was chased by the Shikigamis and was hiding in the mountains for very long~nyaa."

"A ninja getting chased away by a Shikigami, what an extraordinary scene."

"......Sagara-shi. Even if it's against reason, we should hurry now, let's just abandon Ando-shi."

"What did you say?"

"Hanbei will hate Asai-shi and become Sagara-shi's ally. Yanapayama(Inabayama) castle will belong to Sagera-si(Sagara-shi)."

This is a translation of what Goemon actually means. " Promise to save Ando-shi with Hanbei, then abandon Ando-shi."

The exact procedure she has in mind is "Let me start a fire secretly outside the room, this will make her unable to leave the room. After that, I will either use drugs or hypnosis to make her sleep. A little onmyouji brat who

can't summon her Shikigamis can never win against a ninja."

After Ando-shi is murdered, Hanbei will definitely swear upon her name to take revenge for her uncle. Since she is unable to rely on Saitou Yoshitatsu now, the only one left is Sagara-shi. When that happens, Inabayama castle, so as to say, Mino will be up for taking for Nobuna-dono. After taking Mino, the promise of doing great things between Sagara-shi and Nobuna-dono will be fulfilled. And, after looking at Hanbei's achievements, Nobuna-dono and Asai-shi's alliance will become impossible, and the marriage between them will automatically be dissolved.

".....the lough(rough) outline is like this, what do you think, Sayara-shi?"

Towards Goemon who is very inept at talking with long sentences and had almost bitten off her tongue, she let out a sigh in relief after ending her long speech.

But.

Yoshiharu was not even the least bit moved by Goemon's plan.

"Don't ever suggest such a plan again, Goemon."

Maybe due to his anger, Yoshiharu's shoulders had started to shake as he lectured Goemon.

"I am the guy who succeeded Kinoshita Tokichirou! I will forever stand on the side of Japan's cute girls! How could I let Hanbei-chan have a terrible memory!? A thing like Inabayama castle can be abandoned, but I will definitely save Ando-jii-san!"

After being lectured, Goemon answered in a tone that sounded like a cat being caressed "Understood. I was expecting Sagara-shi to say this. Hehe."

"Don't say such a thing knowing what I would say. You and the strength of your Kawanami clan, lend it to me once again.

"Leave it to me, but what do you plan to do with Nobuna-dono and Asai-shi's marriage~nya?

"Uhhh....Th...There should be a way.....!"

"So can you do it?"

"But Nobuna's marriage is a problem between Nagamasa and me, how can I drag Hanbei-chan into this!? That bastard Nagamasa, I will definitely duel it out with him one day."

"Ara-ara. So shameless to want to have everything~ nya, Sagara-shi."

"There will be a day when you must abandon someone ," Goemon said lightly to herself and disappears.

"Don't lump me together with Nagamasa!" Yoshiharu shouted at the disappeared Goemon.

No matter what happens, Nobuna will never marry someone like me. After thinking this, Yoshiharu feels as if his heart is being pierced by needles.

Just then, Hanbei and Inuchiyo gather at Yoshiharu's side.

"Um....Just now, who were you talking to?"

"Ah, Hanbei-chan. That girl just now is a ninja called Goemon. Rather then being a friend..... she is more like family."

"Is.....a ninja. You... You mean those people who kill silently in the darkness with one blow? So....So scary....."

"The same goes for you, and I think that a Shikigami summoned by an onmyouji is much scarier."

".....Yoshiharu. Have you decided on what to do?"

"Oh, Inuchiyo. First Hanbei-chan should send a letter to Yoshitatsu saying that she summoned her Shikigamis to punish the rude Hidanmori and has no intentions to rebel. Then we should move out from Inabayama Castle to make things right. That's the plan, I think."

And then, we three should go and save Ando-jii-san!

While saying that, Yoshiharu raised his fist in a fit of adrenaline, while Inuchiyo mumbled, ".....Yoshiharu, always treats cute girls like his own belongings", and raised her hand and rested it on Yoshiharu's fist while giving an exasperated expression, and Hanbei stretched her hand out cowardly and said, ".....Th...Th...Thanks.....! Yoshiharu-san, this gratitude, I will never forget it, ever... ...!"

With her eyes shining brightly with a hint of tears, Hanbei placed her hand onto both of their hands, before remembering something and addressing the duo.

".....Ah....But, for Oda Nobuna-dono, isn't this fortress something that Yoshiharu-san definitely needs? If Nobuna-dono can't capture Mino successfully, she will have to carry on the marriage with Asai-dono....."

Though she's a brat who loves to cry, Hanbei isn't stupid at all. She now has a vague understanding of the situation between Yoshiharu, Nagamasa and Nobuna. Inuchiyo told her everything from Asai Nagamasa's proposal to the inside affairs of the Oda clan without hiding anything.

Hanbei isn't just a snotty little girl.

In her heart, there's also real courage and her own sense of ideology[16].

This chivalry, can be described as righteousness.

Though Hanbei has extraordinary wits and commanding ability, she does not have many ambitions, instead wanting to live a secluded life alone in Bodaisen.

She served under Yoshitatsu mostly to substitute for her uncle as he tries his best to bring honour to the family, which which she does to repay her gratitude for Ando Iga in raising her in place of her father, or in short, for her sense of righteousness.

From the start, Hanbei's constitution was poor from birth. Even now, getting high in spirits with the duo has her head feeling slightly warm. Before she can gain anything, her own existence will definitely disappear from this world.

When she was still very small, she had abandoned herself to despair. Hanbei may have already realized her own body's limit.

But.

Because she had never been interested in worldly affairs, she had become devoid of desires. She only had an empty feeling like "The world would be the same without me" towards living in this world.

Towards the desireless Hanbei, in place of her desires which leads her is her so called "righteousness".

The same Hanbei now sensed from Yoshiharu, who was supposed to grab Inabayama Castle for Nobuna, a different "righteousness".

Though Yoshiharu did not say anything, Hanbei felt it, the admiration he held toward his own master Nobuna. No, his feelings were far stronger then the word admiration can describe.

Towards Hanbei who had yet to experience the taste of love, this feeling was unbelievably strong.

But to help Hanbei and give up Inabayama Castle, for Yoshiharu, it might mean that he would give up his most important Nobuna.

In fact, all he needs to do is kill the defenseless Hanbei who had already lost the ability to summon her Shikigamis.

But no matter if it's Yoshiharu, or Inuchiyo who is by his side, neither thought of "kill Hanbei and grab Inabayama Castle". This choice never existed inside Yoshiharu before. Right now, after balancing the weight of the situation, it is as if Yoshiharu had decided outright on helping Hanbei in this moment of trouble.

After confirming his "righteousness", Hanbei also decided to use her own "righteousness" to repay Yoshiharu, even if she had to bear the crime of betraying her master and conquering the fortress.

Hanbei puffed up her small chest and announces, "..... I can't accept your help. This fortress, Yoshiharu-san, please accept it. Let me advance to Sunomata alone."

But.

Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo rejected Hanbei's proposal with a smile.

Yoshiharu said, "Till I am fired, we will always be the aides of Hanbei-chan. So it's ok if you don't force yourself " while he rubbed Hanbei's small head.

Hanbei's eyelids start to grow big with tears.

This time, she shed tears not because of fear, but because her heart was overflowing with so much warmth that she did not know what to do, but yet, it relived her.

With this.

Hanbei and her party rendezvous with Goemon and left the castle under the dark of night. They set on the Kawanami clan's raft and sped off on Nagara river.

During this, Hanbei sent a pigeon carrying a letter to Yoshitatsu, who was hiding in the town near the foot of the mountain. It seems that Yoshitatsu had been scared stiff and did not have the guts to return to Inabayama castle.

Yoshiharu readies himself on the raft, with his battle ready stance.

"That Nobuna, this time she will definitely be fuming with anger....." Yoshiharu mumbled.

Just imagining Nobuna being taken away by Nagamasa is enough to cause him terrible agony.

But, looking at the small face of Hanbei taking a nap on his lap, he didn't feel a tinge of regret in his heart.

"This child is the so called "Current Zhuge Liang" in the 21st century that I lived in, Japan's number one genius strategist, the Takenaka Hanbei who had intelligence over 98. Who would have suspected that I would end up trying to pull Hanbei over? But, how can I

let such a weak girl bear such a tragic fate like revenge? I will definitely be scolded by Tokichirou-jii-san if I that happen.

Using the river currents, the Kawanami raft party launched an ambush towards the mid river's Sunomata.

But.....

They couldn't find any trace of Ando Iga and Asai Nagamasa.

Everyone opened their eyes as wide as possible and searched, but not even a kitten was found.

"Bastard! We've been set up!!" yelled the vice commander leading the Kawanami clan, a macho guy named Maeno. He stomped his feet in rage, making Hanbei let out a "Uwahhh" and hide behind Yoshiharu in fear.

".....Yoshiharu, there are words in the soil." Inuchiyo pointed at a soil patch without any grass growing and said.

It seems like the righteous Hanbei-dono is very uncomfortable about being a traitor.

But as long as Sagara Yoshiharu is there, returning Inabayama castle to Saitou Yoshitatsu is impossible.

So according to my plan, I will be the traitor.

Now, knowing how much Sagara hates me, he must have brought Hanbei-dono here.

If that's the case, Hanbei-dono can be rid of the name of traitor.

But after causing such a big mess, I believe it's impossible to return to Mino.

Please come to Omi.

As long as Hanbei-dono becomes my aide, Ando Iga will definitely be safely returned to your side.

"Damn! After seeing that it's impossible to persuade Hanbei to join him, that bastard lured us here just to return Inabayama Castle to Yoshitatsu! That bastard Nagamasa, he really isn't just a normal gigolo.....!"

".....Maybe he is desperate for an alliance with the princess."

"But it's really unbelievable to think that Nagamasa gave up Inabayama castle so easily."

"..... He might be thinking with Hanbei as his aide, he can conquer the fortress alone. Besides, it's the same result with the princess even if he did not conquer it."

"No matter how I see it, he plans to take the Oda clan as his own by political marriage. Why is that guy so persistent over Nobuna when he does not love her at all!"

"It is common sense, Hime-sama who has the same ambition as him should be the best candidate for marriage," Inuchiyo mumbled, but Yoshiharu did not think that way. Yoshiharu is certain that the "world" in Nobuna's eyes and the "world" in Nagamasa's eyes are definitely not the same thing. Though Asai Nagamasa is very energetic and cunning, he is definitely not one who holds compassion towards the people, and he has a laughable chance of competing in equal terms with the Europeans, since those sweet words of his are definitely useless towards the Euro fleet.

……

There's nothing we can do by staying in Sunomata.

Yoshiharu and the gang headed north following the Nagara river, planning to send Hanbei back to her hometown of Bodaisen since no one knew if Yoshitatsu had already sent out troops to kill Hanbei.

Looking at the dark and diminishing Mount Kinka, Inuchiyo said softly, "......Just the Owari army alone is unable to conquer that fortress. Hime-sama will have to marry Asai Nagamasa."

"Not yet, Inuchiyo. I have not given up yet. Though I can't just go accepting the fortress from Hanbei-chan, I will definitely think of something to conquer that Inabayama Castle."

".....Impossible. For one thing, Hime-sama excels at guerrilla warfare. She sucks at besieging fortresses.

"Yeah, because Nobuna is impulsive, but there must be some other way; there must be!"

"Ohhhhhhh! I will definitely stop Nagamasa's marriage for all of you to see!" Yoshiharu shouted, using all his brain juice to think on the boat while Goemon used her pelican to fish in the river.

"It's impossible."

This sentence pierced Yoshiharu's heart like an arrow sounding a "kachak".

"If you really want to stop the marriage, you should kidnap Hanbei back to the portress(fortress)."

"Goemon, even if that's true, I will never kidnap girls. That is my, the popular harem warrior Sagara Yoshiharu's way of life."

"In the end, you will lose Nobuna-dono."

"What can I do? I am someone who won't give up chasing any of my rabbits, no matter if I end up pursuing two or three at once. Besides, it's a matter of life and death, how can I just leave it like this!?"[17]

"Arara. Sagara-shi, what a lustful person you are."

"Goemon, shouldn't you use the word "good" here?"

"No~pe. It's lustful person."

"....*sob* Really, I'm so sorry."

Maybe because she was afraid of the ninja and the macho men, Hanbei once again lowered her head after sitting and hugged her legs a distance away from Goemon and the Kawanami clan members.

"Don't mind us, Hanbei-chan. Getting back Mino for Dousan and going to the capital has always been Nobuna's dream. It's just that currently Nagamasa is interfering and the situation isn't very good."

"......Yoshiharu likes Hime-sama despite being a lowly foot soldier. That's why he wants to use his own strength and stop Nagamasa's marriage."

"Oi, Inuchiyo! Wh-wh-wh-who likes that idiot!? I just... um... as an aide of the Oda clan... er....! It's only that I can't see eye to eye with Asai clan.....! From the start, Nagamasa that bastard, doesn't like Nobuna one bit, he even kept saying about it being a political marriage like it's nothing..... How can I let Nobuna marry such a heartless guy! Uwah, why is my body getting hot so suddenly!?"

"......As you've seen, Yoshiharu has been mesmerized by Hime-sama. He would even go so far as to give up his life."

"Oioi Inuchiyo, stop giving strange information to Hanbei-chan."

"To Yoshiharu-san, Nobuna-dono is really a very important person." Looking at the moon's reflection in the river, Hanbei whispered softly.

"No...Not at all! Don't be deceived by my appearance; a guy like me, I'm fiercely loyal! And don't judge Nobuna like that. Even though normally she is very bashful, very arrogant and never knows when to pull her punches, that violent girl still accepts and keeps me, a foreigner to this world, as an aide."

Hanbei looked at the blushing and stomping Yoshiharu, and said in a small voice, "......If she's really that important to you, you can just hide her somewhere where nobody can touch her. To not let anyone hurt Hime-sama, you should treasure her as such and keep her deep inside a fortress."

The words Hanbei wanted to say actually went more like: 'I just do not want to be mixed into these worldly affairs. If I had chosen seclusion, this wouldn't have happened to uncle and I wouldn't have to face a thing like escaping.'

But instead, Hanbei said "Yoshiharu-san, if you really treat Nobuna-dono so importantly, it should be all right

if you just hide her. And then, Yoshiharu-san would lead the Oda clan into battle in place of Nobuna-dono."

"That is wrong, Hanbei-chan."

"……Eh?"

Yoshiharu stands beside Hanbei, her gaze still fixed on the moon's reflection.

"Hanbei-chan. The moon, it's beautiful, right?"

"……Yes. So beautiful."

"You like the moon?"

"Yes. Though it's a bit scary, but Tsuki-sama[18] is not scary at all."

"So have you ever thought about hiding the moon in a secret place and not letting others see it?"

"Tsuki-sama can't be hidden."

"I'm just saying. If you use your onmyouji, it can be done, right?"

".....I think, I would not hide it away."

"Why, Hanbei-chan?"

".....If there is no Tsuki-sama shining brightly in the night, everyone will feel lonely. The roads will be pitch dark and it will be lots of trouble to everyone..... No matter if I like it or not, it's not a thing I should have alone."

"That's correct. That moon should be shining brightly in the night sky, not hidden away like the night of the new moon. If that's not the case, the moon won't be the moon anymore. It has such a beautiful and mysterious power to lighten up the dark night, yet if it can't use this power and only dwell in the cage, even the moon will feel sad."

"It's the same reason", Yoshiharu said.

"If I hide that fellow, there won't be any meaning anymore. That fellow won't be the same anymore. I... would like that fellow to shine brightly in front of the world."

".....If she shines out in the world, behind the light, there will always be shadows - making lots of enemies,

and making people jealous. If that's the case, I think that your important person will be agonized, Yoshiharu."

"If that happens, it's alright; we as aides will solve it for her. I... want to protect that fellow, and at the same time, I want to let her shine out in the world."

For a while, Hanbei is stumped, and glances at the face of Yoshiharu who is standing by her side.

"Just now... in my heart... Yoshiharu is stealing something away."

Just like that, a small feeling of unfairness yet mingled joy crept into her heart.

This feeling is totally different compared to her " righteousness" burning in her heart.

It's a totally new feeling that Hanbei has never experienced. Righteousness, loyalty, filial piety; her own thoughts, as well as a new passion mixed inside her and erupted into an emotion that was much stronger than the rest.

But from her own mouth, she said things that were completely at odds to this emotion she felt now.

"Yo...Yoshiharu-san is not just conflicted, but extremely greedy as well. So childish."

Using all her strength, her voice resisted.

But even targeted with such a statement, Yoshiharu spoke in low tones with bright eyes.

"Yes, I'm nothing but a brat. I don't want to give up on anything. No matter who teases me about it, I will never become a decent adult who is able to put important things on a scale and measure them."

This time, finally...

Ahhh...

Her most important thing was stolen by the guy in front of her.

Hanbei believes.

But from her mouth came words like...

"Yoshiharu-san, you might really be a big idiot."

"Maybe."

"Yoshiharu-san, is there any talent of yours that is of use to Nobuna-dono?"

".....My skills with the spear and with horse-riding are all downright lousy, and because I will feel uneasy just from seeing blood, going onto the battlefield is a no-no too. But since I'm from the future, I do know some history."

"*Cough* Even if that's true, Yoshiharu-san's actions will change the course of history. If that's the case Yoshiharu-san, you can't help Nobuna-dono at all."

"Hanbei-chan, do you feel cold?"

"No, it's ok; compared to me, Yoshiharu-san's matters are far more important. I think, you must have lived in a peaceful world, right? So you should not be here in this Sengoku era. You are really gentle, but too useless."

"At most, I will just die. There's always a way. I... will never give up on anything."

"But, no matter how you try, a daimyo is a daimyo, and an aide is an aide. Even if Asai-san's marriage is stopped, Yoshiharu-san and Nobuna-dono will definitely not be together. Do you really think that's...."

"......The great me marry that girl? Haha. I've already said it had never crossed my mind....."

Like this, a silence stretched between the both of them, and they gazed quietly at the bright moon reflected onto the river.

And then, Hanbei suddenly spoke clearly in a volume only Yoshiharu can hear.

I've hesitated for a very long time, but if I don't say it out now, I will definitely... This dream that I have finally realized might end right here and now.

Hanbei, for a long time since birth, felt fear creeping up her heart. So right here, knowing the words would change her whole life, she said it out herself.

"I also want to.... Let me be your light and forever protect you."

Takenaka Hanbei....

Just like that, she became the companion of Yoshiharu.

"Genius strategist, Takenaka Hanbei-chan actually teaming up with an unknown guy like me.....? You gotta be joking! Besides, what's this now? Not under Nobuna, but me!?"

If that's the case, the hope of not letting Asai Nagamasa take Nobuna away... might succeed one day!

Yoshiharu, who was shocked at the sudden turn of events, cried "I'm forever in your debt!", and before he realized it was bowing down to the younger Hanbei.

"Raise your head, my master. From now on, my strategies and onmyouji will all belong to you. Don't be reserved; use them as you like."

"Nono! Hanbei-chan isn't my aide! It's companion! It's family! So, you can just call me Yoshiharu like you did before."

".....*stifled laughter* As expected, you are totally different from the warriors of the Sengoku era, Yoshiharu-san."

Yoshiharu nods and bows profusely at Hanbei.

We will definitely save Ando Iga. Before that, even if it's our own allies, we should hide our real identities, the both of them decided.

During all this....

Going back to Inabayama castle, Saitou Yoshitatsu and his aides were holding a feast in a three-storey building, which was also the living quarters of the fortress master.

At the height of 6 feet and 5 inches, Yoshitatsu is a big guy with a face like a child's doodle.

Contrary to his bad looks, his brain is unexpectedly clever. From a young age, Yoshitatsu had been doubting whether he was the true son of his father, Saitou Dousan, who has always been known as fair looking.

After growing up and hearing from Dousan himself that he was the son of the daimyo Dousan had banished from Mino, Yoshitatsu had been hatching a plot to overthrow his godfather Dousan, aiming to revive the Toki clan.

Yoshitatsu had always held an opposing mindset against Dousan, who had benefited from taking Mino away from them and used dictatorial methods to grow the country.

"Otou-sama is but a merchant by birth, so he knows nothing about the importance of the old laws of this country. I'm not the same. I'm a descendant from the distinguished Toki clan. As long as I hold the reins, I will definitely abolish all the changes that Otou-sama has implemented, and let Mino go back to it's original state." Yoshitatsu planned like this at the beginning.

And then with that moment, the last hope that the traditional Yoshitatsu held was shattered to pieces when that perverted geezer Dousan suddenly said, "I have decided to give Mino to Nobuna-chan~"

At that time, the Nobuna who had not been through the battle of Okehazama with Imagawa Yoshimoto was nothing but a fool in the eyes of the residents of Mino.

The residents of Mino, especially the powerful "Mino Three" had all agreed "Who knows what that fool Nobuna will do when she comes to Mino..." Fearing for themselves, they brought the strategist Hanbei and allied

themselves with Yoshitatsu, and in doing so, they allowed Yoshitatsu to force Dousan into a corner at Nagara river.

The Mino Three refers to Ando Iga, Ujiie Bokuzen and Inaba Itetsu. Between the three, Ando Iga holds the top position as Dousan confidant, but due to Dousan's reckless action of passing Mino to Owari's foolish princess Oda Nobuna, Dousan has been labelled as a tyrant. To protect himself, Ando Iga allied himself with Yoshitatsu.

But right now, Ando Iga doesn't even know the location of his own niece.

Yoshitatsu seemed very satisfied as he downed all of the victory wine in one gulp.

"Good job, you really forced Hanbei and her gang to retreat from here, Saruyashamaru-dono."

"Yesterday, no matter if it's about persuading Hanbei to join me or narrowly avoiding eating the dung dango, it was all a failure. This is but one small payback."

Unexpectedly...

Asai Nagamasa sits beside Yoshitatsu with a relaxed face.

"Yoshitatsu-dono, after thinking about the alliance with the Oda clan, I Nagamasa am fed up with that undecided foolish princess. As of now, please take good care of me."

"Hmmm. Saruyashamaru-dono, don't tell me this is also a payback to Oda Nobuna for not responding to your advances?"

Though with a height of 6 foot 5 inches and a face that is totally fated to not have any love experience, Yoshitatsu isn't stupid.

"What do you mean?"

"If that foolish princess managed to absorb Mino into the influence of Owari, she will be a world renowned daimyo. If that's the case, there won't be any need to be the wife of Saruyashamaru-dono. In contrast to that, if that happens, Saruyashamaru-dono will be slightly inferior when compared to the Oda clan. So, to prevent Inabayama castle from falling into the hands of the Oda

clan while it was controlled by Hanbei, and because you failed to persuade Hanbei to join you, you planned to let me gain back this fortress, isn't that right?"

The so called doing others a favor, in fact, all of it is spot on by Yoshitatsu.

This artistically-lacking face and that thick body actually matches Dousan in terms of intelligence. Nagamasa feels fear in his heart, but still maintains a calm face.

"Saruyashamaru-dono, even without Hanbei, as long as I avoid open warfare, this Inabayama castle has no weakness. That foolish Nobuna will definitely be disdained after failing the last time, and will be thinking who she might look to for help. I believe the pair of you will become a couple very soon."

"Hmmm. At that time, we might just combine forces and attack Inabayama castle, is this really okay?"

"Of course. It's different if the Oda clan has Hanbei, but this fortress will never fall."

"Hmmm, you have a point."

Looks like the fact that I'm holding Ando Iga as a hostage has not been discovered; if so, Hanbei will definitely serve me one day. Nagamasa laughed in his heart while letting out a sign of relief, but he does not know the fact that Hanbei had already sworn to be by Yoshiharu's side.

There might be a day when both of them will become enemies, and with that in mind, both Saitou Yoshitatsu and Asai Nagamasa laugh with deep meaning and toast.

The enemy of yesterday can become today's friend, but they may just as easily become your enemy in the future.

This is a certainty in the Sengoku era.

Yoshitatsu's aides all signaled to Yoshitatsu with their eyes, *Why not finish him off here?*, but Yoshitatsu does not seem to think that way.

It's partly Nagamasa's effort for the reclaiming of Inabayama castle, and if Nagamasa died here, there won't be a chance for me to see that foolish princess of Owari being forced into a marriage she doesn't want, with that unwilling expression of hers.

If she became the wife of the experienced Saruyashamaru, that willfull and foolish princess might learn her limits and do her duty as a woman. After waking up from the unrealistic dream of conquering the world, she might be disdained and give up Mino.

Beneath this doodle-like face, Yoshitatsu has already predicted to that extent.

From Nagamasa's point of view, a man like Yoshitatsu who can become a capable Sengoku daimyo can be said to be lucky.

Even without the help of the strategist Hanbei, Yoshitatsu still had ways to protect Inabayama castle from the Oda army.

Nagamasa is certain that there is no other choice for Nobuna than to obey his orders. It could be said that he had Owari in his hands now. From now on, as long as Omi and Owari are allied together, sieging Mino with an all surround formation, there will be a day when Inabayama Castle will be his. During the day when he was climbing the castle, Nagamasa has memorized every detail and piece of structural information in this fortress.

In this world where wars are abundant, it's a place where you have to bluff and cheat your way through.

For Nagamasa, who is said to be the reincarnation of ambition, there is no such thing as friendship in this world, nor are there things like romantic love or family loves. All he does is rely on his naturally good looks, using different girls and abandoning them in stride. This way of doing things was actually very similar to that used by the young Viper, Saitou Dousan.

A person born in a daimyo family of the Sengoku era does not need love. Their so called family members are nothing but chess pieces.

Yoshitatsu had banished his own godfather, and Nagamasa has also forced his useless father Hisamasa to retire and give up the position of head of the clan.

Even that Nobuna will one day give up on that childish dream of "I want to marry the man I like", and come under me.

Without knowing why, the Nagamasa whose heart had never been moved by any female wanted to see the sobbing face of Nobuna when her dream was shattered.

Oda Nobuna and Sagara Yoshiharu; these two people have totally different positions, yet they always quarrel and threw curses at each other once they are together. But looking at the their purity, Nagamasa would always slip into a state of melancholy. Looking at these two people who had totally no regard of their relationship would remind Nagamasa of his long forgotten, yet never really given up dream.

Asai Nagamasa isn't someone who just plays with women.

But the truth behind Nagamasa's long forgotten dream can never be known to others. Even to Nobuna who will soon be his wife, not a word can be spoken to her.

"Ara, tonight is really a night worth celebrating. To the prosperity of the Saitou and Asai clans, cheers!"

Chapter 4 : Sunomata Ichiya Castle!

After successfully taking back Inabayama Castle, Saitou Yoshitatsu soon put out search warrants for Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo in the towns.

Yoshiharu's face seemed just like an evil bandit's, and Inuchiyo was just portrayed as wearing a tiger helm.

[These people are in cahoots with Takenaka Hanbei who tried to revolt. They are actually spies sent from Owari.]

With this poster, Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo became the masterminds and had bounties for their capture.

With this, it was impossible to wander around Mino.

To continue checking on Ando Iga's whereabouts, Yoshiharu lent Goemon and the Kawanami members to Hanbei. He and Inuchiyo rushed back to Owari's Kiyosu castle.

But.....

After returning to Aoshuu castle, not even a ronin was in sight.

Aoshuu had become a ghost town.

"What is going on, Inuchiyo?"

"....???"

Are the folks in the Five Leaf Aralia houses okay? The worried duo hurried over, but what greeted them was a shocking scene.

Shibata Katsuie had Nene seated on her shoulders as she was commanding her troops to surround Yoshiharu's house. No matter how people see it, it's obvious that they are going to put the house to fire.

"Hurry and burn the house!"

"Understood!"

"Roger!"

A fiery scene...

Yoshiharu looked on as his small, cozy home was torched just like that.

With fury burning in his heart, Yoshiharu walked up behind Katsuie as she rambles "Why must I be tasked with such a job" and launched a Sagara family kick.

It landed nicely onto Katsuie's butt.

"Wh-Wh-Wh-What are you doing, you damn saru?! Do you hold that much of a grudge towards me?"

"That is what I should be saying! Don't burn my house just because I'm not in! Katsuie you... Just what deep hatred do you have against me.....!"

"I...I remember clearly, you are the one who molested my breasts at the previous battle. This kind of grudge can't be easily forgotten!"

"That happened during Okehazama, right!? But do you have to burn my house just because of that?"

".....Inuchiyo's house... is burning too."

"Katsuie~! This time round, I will definitely settle it right here! I will take revenge~!"

"Wh...Why are your hands suddenly aiming for my breasts? Stop it, Saru! Ahhhhhh!"

"Obviously because you're burning my house.... But besides that, after looking at that ridiculous ball shaped thing, I don't know why, but I just want to touch and feel it!"

"Ahhhhh, why is this ero-saru suddenly in heat!?"

"Onii-sama. This was ordered by the princess." Nene who is riding on Katsuie's shoulders stopped Yoshiharu.

"Nobuna's orders? I get it now... That woman finally decided to burn me to death, right!?"

"No!"

"Listen to me, Saru. During the period when you guys were out, Nobuna-sama decided to shift her base from Aoshuu to Komakiyama. The retainers had all been ordered to shift there too. So currently, those who have not moved over will have their house burned down."

"Though Nobuna has always been stubborn, this is about burning down the house of retainers who refuse to

move... There must be a limit to being rash!" Yoshiharu thought.

"Katsuie. So you choose my house to be your first target, right!?"

"What choice do I have!? Who caused Hime-sama to fume and mutter 'Why isn't that Saru coming back? Why isn't that Saru coming back?' anyways?"

"I'm not against moving, I just wasn't at home."

"Onii-sama, Nene's oji-san had already moved to Komakiyama! Let's go together!"

"......Inuchiyo wants to go there too."

With Katsuie leading, they head towards Komakiyama .

"Anyway Katsuie, what sort of place is Komakiyama?"

"It's a fortress located at the north side of Aoshuu. Hime-sama said this will lead us closer to Mino."

"I see. So when marching troops to Mino, the distance will be greatly reduced."

"Those stubborn old retainers kept saying things like ' Moving the base is something I've never heard of. At least give us a year to move' and kept opposing. But all of them were outright rejected by Hime-sama, and we moved to Komakiyama on that exact day. After that, she asked me to burn the houses of those who refuse to move , that's it."

Nobuna, what kind of arsonist are you? Yoshiharu thought to himself.

"So Katsuie, compared to those old opposition folks, what's your reason for choosing my house to burn first?"

"You sure are irritating. I didn't plan to burn it with you inside anyway, so everything should be okay."

"It's totally not okay! Katsuie, looks like the both of us need to have a nice chat."

"You're a mere vice-captain; what makes you think that you can have anything to say about the top aide of the Oda clan? Really, this damn Saru is totally rude."

Komakiyama, located at the northern side of Owari is a smaller mountain, and a secluded place.

But compared to Kiyosu castle which is right in the middle of Owari, this place is obviously much closer to Inabayama castle.

After suffering numerous ambushes from the Mino army, Nobuna ordered Niwa Nagahide to build a fortress in Komakiyama.

Once determined, Nobuna's action speed can only be described as lightning fast.

Not waiting for the construction of Komakiyama to be completed, Nobuna ordered all her retainers to shift from Aoshuu.

After reaching Komakiyama, Katsuie gave Nene over to Goemon to look after, and dragged Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo over to Nobuna's room.[19]

Though Nobuna's room wasn't completed, the hastily built room was already decorated with her favorite globe , a tiger, several bear skins stretched out on the floor as carpets, and the foreign bought giant world map was already on the wall.

And, as if she were peeking on Inabayama castle, at her side was a big telescope too.

"Hime-sama! Sagara Yoshiharu and Maeda Inuchiyo are here!"

"Dearuka[20]. Riku, thanks."

Letting out sounds of "Kasha, kasha" while eating her chicken wing, Nobuna had her eyebrows tightly knitted.

Looks like because she had not seen Yoshiharu for a some time, her mood has taken a turn for the worse.

"Saru, Inuchiyo, what is this about?"

Nobuna raised the warrant that was pasted everywhere in Mino right up to Yoshiharu's face.

"This monkey face that looks totally like a bad guy; no matter how I see it, it's you. The mastermind of asking Hanbei to revolt..... has already been written here clearly. Besides, the identity of you being from Owari is totally exposed."

"No, that's because...."

"What the hell is going on, Saru? I'll say this first: based on your explanation and the situation, your head might end up off your shoulders."

"......No! It's... like this."

If I let that big mouthed Yoshiharu speak, Nobuna might become even more angry Inuchiyo noticed, so she starts to explain things in simple sentences.

Though Inuchiyo didn't speak much, she had a talent for explaining the situation clearly.

Nobuna, who took very good care of Inuchiyo, said " What am I to do with you, tell me first next time when you guys want to persuade someone to join us." and let things go.

"Hime-sama! This kind of damned Saru, don't tell me you are not even going to punish him!? A mere vice-captain who doesn't know his own strength, recklessly tried to persuade an enemy commander to join our side, and, worst of all, failed and escaped back here."

"Our princess is once again biased towards that damn Saru!" Katsuie rambled on and on. Her words rattled on

until Nobuna couldn't bear it any longer, grabbing hold of her sword and saying in a loud voice,

"I get it already, Riku. Saru, come over for a talk."

"What's with the female gang boss action?" Yoshiharu scratched his head while following Nobuna's lead.

"Wait a minute, Hime-sama?! You are really going to let this damn Saru off without any punishment? Don't tell me now you guys are going on a sweet date.....? Let me tag along too!"

"......Katsuie, Wait here."

Inuchiyo hugged Katsuie who is rushing to follow them, and Katsuie tries to break free while shouting "Let me go!"

Without any reason, it has suddenly become a wrestling showdown between the two of them in the room.

Not considering the difference in body size, the breast size is totally different, making this showdown expectantly good.

"Ohhhhh....Inuchiyo, your waist is unexpectedly heavy .....!"

".....Katsuie's breast, so heavy. Makes me furious!"

"Ehhhhh!? Why, why must all of you be angry at me!?"

".....Touch them yourself to know why!"

"I don't understand a thing!! What's going on? Is there a problem with my personality?"

".....No problem with it, the problem lies with your chest."

"Ehhhh, what is going on.....!?"

"What's with the fuss outside. Those two sure are noisy."

Nobuna stood at the walkway, gazing at the plains stretching from the top of Komakiyama across its whole northern side. Different from her usual happy go lucky style, today Nobuna is wearing a blue kimono. This type of attire can be worn both with her armor once battle erupts and as normal clothing. There isn't much of a problem. Though she likely only considers this outfit in

terms of mobility, on Nobuna it does have a few points of feminine added to it.

Sitting at the side, Yoshiharu feels his heartbeat speed up without a reason.

"Don't tell me she became more sexy because of Nagamasa's proposal.... Damn it"

"You are a bit noisy too, Saru."

Nobuna looks across the fast currents of the Kiso river towards her and her father Nobuhide's combined wish, the yet undefeated Inabayama castle.

Looking at Nobuna, who keeps shifting her legs in frustration while looking through her telescope, her heart's impatience can be seen clearly.

Shifting her own base from Aoshuu to Komakiyama is also a physical representation of Nobuna's impatience, wanting to get nearer to Inabayama castle at all cost, no matter if it's just one or two small steps.

At this hastily built courtyard, if one looks clearly they can find exact replicas of Mino's geography on a 3D model. The small water trenches must be the Nagara

river and Kiso river. At the centre, the hill must be Mount Kinka. Nobuna looks at the model quietly, almost like she is thinking of ways to capture Mino.

"Even though I'm so close, I just can't get it."

"Eh? Isn't this about my punishment?" Sagara scratched his head, confused.

"Think of something."

"So....? Something? What about it?"

"No. I mean a plan. The plan to capture Inabayama castle! It's impossible to conquer that fortress with just shifting my home to a closer place! The reason I built a castle right here in Komakiyama in the first place was to find a weak spot in that mountain fortress."

"It didn't work out in the end?"

"Umm. In the end, Komakiyama is like a small hill; it cannot be compared to Mount Kinka. It can't be used in planning at all."

The famous work of Viper, Saitou Dousan, the famed Inabayama castle.

Even without Takenaka Hanbei, the besieged Yoshitatsu can still easily force the Oda clan home. And even if Nobuna besieged the nearby town instead, she faces the danger of Dousan's designed night warfare.

"In terms of strategies, surrounding Inabayama castle and cutting the water supply is not such a bad idea."

"But even though we have Motoyasu to protect us from the east side, we can't just let Owari be empty for a long time."

"The most important thing is that, come autumn, the field needs to be tended, right? So a drawn out battle is impossible. To an ordinary soldier, farming is what they should be doing. Even if they are warriors, there are quite a number who are also farmers. I have also gathered all the retainers to this town at the foot of Komakiyama as well as professional soldiers, but to build a dedicated army consumes both time and money."

"Besides, burning other people's home is a bit too much!" Yoshiharu grumbled unhappily.

"Saru, after listening to my great army restructuring plan, you should at least be more surprised."

"Aren't you the great Oda Nobuna? This kind of thing is a given for you."

"So boring. It would be troublesome if you were like Riku, who said 'What are you saying, Hime-sama, I don't understand anything at all' with her teary eyes, but at least show some gratitude."

"Nobuna, because Mino now does not have Hanbei, I think it's far more important than you think. If we have to think of a way to capture Inabayama castle, it's not like there isn't a way..."

"What a slow and hesitating way of saying things." Nobuna's small lips formed a (¯ ^).

"Nowadays, you are always hesitating. Stop beating around the bush. If there's something you want to say, just say it out."

"The promise of a reward, don't you forget it."

"......I...I did not forget it at all."

Suddenly Nobuna's face blushed bright red, and she turned her head away in a hurry.

Yoshiharu did not mind too much of Nobuna's reaction. In his mind, he thinks of the extremely famous incident that he has seen numerous times in the sengoku SLG's greatest work, "Ambition of Oda Nobunaga".

The incident that leaves it's mark in the sengoku history, Kinoshita Tokichiro's "Sunomata Ichiya Castle".

This history incident goes roughly like this.

Oda Nobunaga, preparing to conquer Mino, is determined to build a castle at the east side of Mino at Sunomata. But Sunomata itself is right inside the enemy's territory. All of Nobunaga's important generals had failed, yet the inconspicuous Kinoshita Tokichirou used just a night's time to build it.

"Saru, I'm getting impatient. Just quickly say what you have in mind, but don't tell me things like 'building a castle in Sunomata'".

"Eh!? How did you know!?"

"If I can get a strategic foothold in Sunomata, the Mino people will be shocked and come running to me for help. But Yoshitatsu isn't an idiot. He will definitely stop us. So isn't something like that impossible?"

"Though dangerous, it's not totally impossible. I do have a secret plan from the sengoku game[21]."

"You're gonna lose your life. This is a bet that you can't win."

"But there's no other way. For the promise of the reward, I won't back down."

"You? A footsoldier who does not have any one to command? How can you do it?"

"The Kawanami people will give me a hand. If this succeeds, remember to recruit them."

"Team up with those bandits? Really, they are quite strange."

"But I myself do not have too much manpower for you . Though I have Takechiyo guarding the east and west side, there has been a lot of tension with Ise on the east" Nobuna said.

"The recently recruited Koga warrior, Takigawa Kazumasu, is now near Ise's frontline. Who knows when they will start attacking the borders?"

"Such a thing happened when I'm out? You should really behave outside. You may just be someone who is ' soon to be married'. Learn how to control yourself a bit."

"Shut up. Why is a mere retainer being so arrogant? I must say this first, my first and only concern right now is just conquering Mino. I did not have a single thought about getting married. Anyways, the only man who is compatible to the smart, beautiful, demure, and no. 1 bishoujo like me can never be found in the world."

"Isn't there a Nagamasa?"

Nobuna glanced over, and sent a kick.

Yoshiharu reflexively dodged it easily.

"Hmph! That guy is only compatible in looks and status. Listen! Something like status, that's totally due to you being lucky that you are born of a distinguished family. Looks are the same..... To say nothing of peaceful eras, it's the sengoku era now. No matter the gender, what you should rely on is your own strength and ambitions. A thing like status is not important at all!"

Fuming, and putting on a face with her eyes shining by the light, it's almost as if Nobuna is shining.

"If the one becoming my husband is not someone that can see the same dream as mine, I would rather die than marry him."

Comparing this girl to the moon really is a mistake.

Her brightness and attractiveness is not something that the moon can be compared to.

This pair of eyes which shines like the sun, I will definitely be scorched if I raise my hand towards her body, Yoshiharu thought.

Following such a princess, I can die without regrets.

"That Nagamasa, isn't he just a sissy who holds great ambitions? 'A sengoku daimyo's marriage does not need love'? What is the matter with him!? God knows where he learned that from; who does he think he is? If he thinks that he can make my heart stir with just that, he is totally wrong! I'm Owari's foolish princess! If that kind of guy is considered mature, I do not want to be like that."

"Ah, hmmm..."

"Saru! Are you unmoved after letting that guy walk all over you? Your master is being belittled! Didn't you say you are here to fulfill my wish? If so, hurry and capture Mino for me!"

For some reason, Nobuna's scolding words towards Yoshiharu seemed to call out a wish like *If you don't want me to be snatched away by Nagamasa, then catch me yourself!*

No no, that's just my delusion. It must be because Nene has kept me away from girls too long. That's why I'm under such mental stress! This world isn't a gal game or an ecchi anime, how can there be such a development? Yoshiharu shakes his head in panic, while mumbling "Mi...Mino, I will definitely capture it."

"Why is your expression so mysterious? Look at me when you're talking."

Blushing, Nobuna comes near, with her face getting near, but Yoshiharu turns his face away in panic.

Damn. The serious Nobuna is just so striking... Why, why is my heart beating so fast now...?

"Sta...Status is not important..... You're the only one that would say this kind of thing. The retainers and the people won't think that way."

".....They are a bunch of idiots anyway, who cares what they think."

"That is a bad habit of yours. This world has it's own regulations and stuff. If you don't consider the opinion of the majority and push your own strange reforms, there will be a day when your own retainers will attack you. It's exactly because of this that Dousan lost Mino."

"Hmph. I didn't expect you to be the kind of man who would say such a boring thing."

"What I said just now was common sense. No matter when, oba-chan will stand by your side. No matter if it's the world, or love, I will help you obtain it. I will protect you, and then, I will let you shine in front of the whole world."

".....Eh.....?"

"How is it, are you moved by these childish words I said?"

"……Ah……"

Nobuna lowered her head, not speaking a word.

In an instant, a wave of embarrassment creeps silently between the two of them.

That was the time you should retort! Why aren't you retorting like you usually are!? Yoshiharu starts to panic in his heart.

"Anyway, I will build the castle in Sunomata." Yoshiharu said while standing up.

"Nobuna. I will definitely conquer Inabayama Castle. Then, remember that promise of a reward of anything I want; you must fulfill it for me! I should say it now, just having Nene follow me around is irritating enough, so don't you give me something like another sister or brother, okay?"

"…..Eh? Um...Ok...."

Nobuna nods her head honestly.

He felt strange about Nobuna's reaction, but as the culprit, Yoshiharu does not know what his own actions mean.

Totally not sensing the atmosphere, Yoshiharu left these words while preparing to leave.

"....Hey, Nobuna. If I failed in capturing Mino, do you really plan to marry Nagamasa?"

".....Um. It is totally not related to you, since you'll just be marrying a monkey as a wife."

"....Ah, I see. Hmmm, Is Hanbei-chan okay.... That child is such a crybaby, it makes me worried to part with her."

Kachak.

That's the sound of Nobuna's blood vessels on her head breaking.

".....so that's it. I see now. I almost forgot... Why do you get Takenaka Hanbei as your subordinate, ah?"

"Though a bunch of mishaps and misunderstandings occurred and caused a fuss, that child actually had no ambition to revolt."

"Anyway, what made you decide to not bring Hanbei to me? Becoming your subordinate means that she would rather be under a pet I take care of than to be under me. Why did Hanbei refuse to come under me, isn't that too rude?"

"It's over. Considering Hanbei-chan was originally so afraid of Nobuna and Viper, if she was brought in front of the demon king mode Nobuna, it would be strange if she did not faint." Yoshiharu realized in that moment, *Damn, I said the wrong thing when I should be saying things that the other party wants to hear!* and regretted his actions.

"Ha...Hanbei-chan is currently searching for her uncle who was kidnapped by Asai Nagamasa. Because of the search warrant, Inuchiyo and I had to retreat for now, but Goemon and the Kawanami people are by Hanbei-chan's side....."

".....now that you mention it, I heard from Inuchiyo that when you guys captured Inabayama castle, you were together with Hanbei, weren't you? Don't tell me.....

. you were planning to keep Hanbei from being labeled as a traitor, and so you gave up that castle? You haven't forgotten about that reward, have you?"

Damn, she found out!

"No, it's not like this. If I just killed Hanbei, who had just declared that she has no intentions to revolt, and captured the castle, would you really be happy about it?"

"No. Actually, doing it like this fits your style more. But, for the sake of a girl, you gave up a whole fortress after going through such difficulty to gain it.... You're really an idiot....."

"I...I'm the kind guy of guy who just won't give anything up! Don't lump me with that bastard Nagamasa ! His so called maturity is just an excuse to throw away what's most important!"

After a brief silence, Nobuna opens her mouth and calmly said, ".....I've decided to marry Asai Nagamasa."

……

……

Ehhhhh?

Wait... Why? What happened?

×○××Uwahhhh×× ¥

Yoshiharu opposed with unknown sounds.

Looks like he finally mastered the monkey language.

"Didn't you hear Inuchiyo's report? That guy, after failing to persuade Hanbei and capture Inabayama castle, he kidnapped Hanbei-chan's father! He is that kind of dirty bastard who played with women's hearts for his own motives."

"For the sake of unifying the world, it's ok to marry such a man. Besides, you are just a naive idiot. Plus you chose Hanbei over me, right?"

"Hu...Huh!?"

"I....I...It does not mean that I want you to be my husband, I'm only saying. If I marry someone like you who keeps flirting everywhere, you will one day give up a country or castle due to a girl, won't you!? If that's the case, how long will I wait until I can fulfill my wish of

uniting the world! Rather than the world, I can't even conquer Mino, can I!?"

"Oi, don't tell me you are throwing a tantrum just because I gave up Inabayama castle to save Hanbei-chan? Why are you so petty!?"

"It's not like that! IDIOT!"

Nobuna's voice starts to shake.

"What... What I want is, to retrieve Mino while Viper is still alive! After being banished from Mino, Viper is aging day by day... Definitely... it must be... his days are numbered! He spent his life contributing to Mino, I do not want him to die banished in Owari! Only me... and not Yoshitatsu, I'm the only one to which Viper can pass his dream on to... I want to prove to him that his choice isn't wrong! I don't want him to regret his decision!"

All of a sudden, Yoshiharu is stumped.

That's why, so that's why Nobuna is so anxious and fretful.

If it's the old Nobuna, during the time when Asai Nagamasa proposes, she would reject it saying "I want to marry the man I love."

But she did not even send out a rejection letter for Nagamasa's proposal, and recklessly rushed into Mino letting her troops get beaten up by Hanbei before retreating, and then, leaving Aoshuu, moving to Komakiyama; Nobuna's persistence towards Mino is totally like a scorching fire.

Something had changed inside Nobuna. Standing in front of him, she is no longer the Nobuna from before.

This change, including the reason for the change.....

He wasn't able to understand..... he was not even given a chance to.

Besides apologizing, there was nothing he could do.

"Besides, compared to Inabayama castle, isn't Hanbei more important? So as to say, if I can't conquer Mino and had to marry Nagamasa in the end, you wouldn't care in the least, right!? Since you have chosen Hanbei yourself, then just shut your mouth honestly!"

"Eh? I chose Hanbei-chan? What do you mean?"

"Haven't you been totally mesmerized by Hanbei!? Isn't Hanbei more important than me?"

"Wh...Wh...Wh...What you just said is a big misunderstanding!"

"You are the one who is misunderstanding, Saru! Besides, what makes you, a mere monkey, have the right to say anything about my marriage? Who do you think you are to me, I'm Owari's hime daimyo, Oda Nobuna!"

"I know that without you saying it!"

"Have you forgotten about the reward? If that's the case... aren't I..... just like an idiot!?"

"Eh.....? Nobuna?"

Nobuna straighten 3 fingers and said.

3 days later.

"I'm not a dilly-dallying woman! I've decided! In three days, I will marry Omi's Asai Nagamasa!"

"Oi, what do you mean by three days!? Such a rash decision...!? No, definitely no! No matter what, you can't marry that kind of a guy in a spat of anger!"

"Shut up! All of this is caused by you not capturing that fortress! So shameless to act suave in front of both Hanbei and me! In the future, just protect that cute little kitten Hanbei and live the rest of your life!"

"Nnnnnnno, it's not that kind of relationship with Hanbei-chan and me! It's all a misunderstanding! Don't tell me..... you're jealous?!"

Bam!!!!

Nobuna stepped her foot onto Yoshiharu's face, she used her whole body strength and stepped on it!

"Uwahhh!? Ouuccchhhh! Damn, don't step on my face! I'm just trying to stop your marriage! As a revenge for you not giving me the number 1 bishoujo, I will definitely stop your happiness! I haven't given up yet, just you wait. I will definitely stop this marriage for you to see!"

"Oh, I see! If you wish so strongly to stop me from marrying, then capture Inabayama castle in 3 days for me !"

"Ok, I will definitely use my own strength and capture it for you to see!!!!!"

Just when the both of them finish quarreling and Yoshiharu left...

Katsuie and the retired Saitou Dousan came to Nobuna's side one after the other, it seems like the both of them overheard the conversation between Nobuna and Yoshiharu.

"Dumb... too dumb! How can you choose the marriage with Asai Nagamasa just because you can't think of a way to capture Mino! To do such a foolish thing just because of the territory of Mino....."

Dousan-jiisan's face seems so furious that it was almost like he might have a stroke and die right away.

"Nobuna-dono. This look of yours, I can't bear it anymore!

Don't tell me he heard the conversation with Yoshiharu? A slightly embarrassed Nobuna stuttered and said, "Sh...Shut up Viper. It's my own freedom who I want to marry!"

"No! Even if it's just a title, I'm still your father, and this I cannot allow! Though Asai Nagamasa is a distinguished sengoku daimyo, he's just a guy who is a bit smart but does not see the big picture! It's okay if it's just an alliance partner, but as a husband, he does not suit you! Besides, it is impossible for you to love that guy !"

"I can't help it! There is no one in the world that is compatible with me, so I can only choose this kind of political marriage!"

"....You... idiotic brat!!!!"

Dousan's high decibel shout, makes Nobuna take a few steps back without knowing it.

"The man who suits you, isn't he right beside you!? To help you in your destiny, isn't there a guy who passed through time and space to come to your side!? Don't act

dumb with me! How can you destroy your own future over a bout of foolish jealousy?! Don't tell me the so esteemed Oda Nobuna is just an inexperienced brat!?"

"......Uhhhh..... Shut up Shut up Shut up! Stupid Viper! "

"I will not accept any more positions." After saying this , Viper left!

"....Hmph.... What a temper, that's why I hate geezers!"

Nobuna stood in the courtyard silently, staring at the model Inabayama castle.

At her side, Katsuie suddenly kneels down by Nobuna's legs, sobbing while saying, "To give up your chastity just to fulfill your filial duties... and to get reprimanded like that... *sob sob* Hime-sama is just too pitiful! That thing about Sunomata castle, please do allow me Katsuie to complete it for you!"

"Eh, but.... that has been given to Saru....."

"I, Shibata Katsuie, will definitely build it up in three days! And then, I will save Hime-sama from the evil hands of Nagamasa! I'm moving out now to Sunomata, pardon me, Hime-sama!"

"Ah... Wait... Riku?"

If this goes on, Hime-sama.....Hime-sama will be snatched away by Asai Nagamasa~

The general who is overly anxious for her master, Shibata Katsuie, who did not listen to Nobuna's and Nagahide's persuasions, immediately gathered her own men, beat up Yoshiharu who kept rambling "Why are you snatching my job?" and left for Sunomata.

An estimate of 3000 soldiers and workers of up to 5000 .

Though non-combat personnel made up over half of the troops, it was still a 8000 strong army.

"People, gather your courage~! If we fail, the beautiful Nobuna-sama will be dirtied by Asai Nagamasa~!"

If Saru failed the mission of building a castle in Sunomata, Hime-sama will be Asai Nagamasa's wife.

But if that damn Saru managed to build it up and capture Mino, Hime-sama might become Saru's wife due to the reward promise.

No matter which, I don't want it!

"If that's the case, there isn't any other way then me to build the castle! If I capture Mino, and fulfill the promise of the reward, Hime-sama will be mine.... Eh.... What the hell am I thinking?!"

"If the Mino troops dare to stop me, I will let them become souls under my spear! " Katsuie, filled with fierce killing aura, sneaked into Mino's territory, Sunomata. But the location of Sunomata is at Kawakokoro Island which is formed near where the rivers meet, including Nagara river.

At this type of geographical disadvantage, the castle construction troops have to face the enemy with their backs to the river. Add that to the muddy riverbank

making movement difficult, and it's an extremely dangerous battleground which limits troop maneuverability severely.

Even if it's Owari's number 1 general, Shibata Katsuie, building a castle in this kind of place can't be done by someone with just effort.

But even if it's like this, Katsuie will never back down!

At the front of the flood-like Mino army, Katsuie commanded the troops while shouting, "Guys, we will protect Hime-sama~! Even if death awaits us, we will die for Hime-sama~!"

Shibata Katsuie is just such a general whose brain is filled with loyalty and righteousness.

2 days later, a sobbing Katsuie fled back to Komakiyama.

Kneeling in front of Nobuna, she reported her failure.

"Th...The first day, was still considered smooth.... But we were ambushed by Saito's forces on the second day making the battlefield a mess. Though the troops bravely faced the enemy, the workers were all terrified and fled!"

"It's just a day before the marriage with that damn Asai Nagamasa! Let me commit seppuku!" The totally confused Katsuie started to make a scene. In the end, she was stopped by the smiling Nagahide, "Maa, it's all ok~."

"It's thanks to Katsuie-dono's strength and flexible command that we can avoid annihilation. But the workers who fled will be afraid of us punishing them and won't return most likely. 40 points."

Sitting cross legged, with a chicken wing in her mouth, Nobuna let out a sigh.

".....I received the letter from Asai Nagamasa. He will bring his troops over to Owari to prepare for the wedding."

Though Nobuna's tone is light, it's clear that she was feeling very down about such a decision, while her face looks almost close to tears. Looking at Nobuna, Katsuie starts to weep even more.

"Uwaahhhhh. I think I should just commit seppuku after all~~!"

"....Stop it, Riku. If you are dead, not to mention conquering Mino, even the protection of Owari will become a problem. From now on, don't think about seppuku anymore."

"Ahh! Hi...Hime-sama.... You're too kind....! I Katsuie, in this life, even if it's my last breath, I will always follow Hime-sama!"

"Ok ok I got it, don't keep saying things like that."

"Katsuie really is a muscle head[22]." Yoshiharu whispered to Inuchiyo.

"What? A new form of Kimono? Inuchiyo doesn't understand"

Yoshiharu, after fainting from the beating from Katsuie, was unconscious for two days. After finally waking up with difficulty, there was only a day left until the deadline to conquer Mino.

Nobuna's eyes swept over the people present, while the people all lowered their head without a word.

A mission that even Katsuie was unable to finish, it's too difficult for the rest. Add that to the workers having all fled, it's impossible to just send out troops and rely on soldiers to build the castle.

"Well, let's just put aside building a castle in Sunomata . It's hard to accept, but it looks like I must marry Nagamasa."

"Wait just a minute! Nobuna! Didn't I tell you that I will build the castle up for you to see!?"

Yoshiharu who is sitting at the back suddenly stood up and said.

"Damn, this skit of Hime-sama and that damn Saru is about to begin again." Katsuie just can't accept it.

But Nobuna did not retort back like usual.

"Saru. Sorry but we just don't have enough manpower now, such a thing can't be helped, can it?"

"Don't just give up! And I do not plan to bring anyone else anyway! Just the Kawanami people will be enough to build that castle!"

"But even with the lack of manpower, this castle's 3000 strong guarding troops can still be lent to you, but I don't think they would listen to a a person with such a lowly rank like you."

"I don't need anything like that!"

"Huh? What are you saying? Don't tell me you really are courting death!?"

"No. If I bring so many people to Sunomata, the enemy will definitely notice it!" Yoshiharu blinked and said, "So, just us and the Kawanami clan is enough."

"With so little people, do you really think you can finish it in one night?"

"Yeah. I will build the Sunomata castle in one night. By then, Yoshitatsu will definitely not know that it's nothing but a empty castle and sent all his troops out to attack in panic. Once it happens, you just have to strike in full force, moving out and attack the now empty Inabayama castle from Komakiyama. With that Mino can be captured within a day."

"In a day? Without any soldiers or able men? Is Saru-dono committing suicide?" The retainers started talking among themselves.

"You damn Saru should keep sleep talking to a limit!" Katsuie said with her eyebrows knitted closely.

"Hi...Hime-sama, that's just too crazy! It will be like Saru is running to his death! Er... But to me, Saru's death means that the chastity of Hime-sama will be safe.... but if I think back, I will definitely have nightmares."

"Why do you always talk about my chastity, Riku? Anyway, if I believe this kind of nonsense from Saru, won't I be like an idiot. As expected I should just ask Nagamasa for reinforcements."

"Oioi, wait Nobuna! Between me and that sissy, exactly who do you believe!? "

"Huh? Aren't you the sissy here? Don't tell me you don't know about it?"

"Such a marriage does you no benefit at all! Nagamasa just wants to use you and this marriage to obtain both Owari and Mino! If you do something like this, will the Viper really be glad!?"

"What choice do I have!? I don't care if you wanna die in Sunomata, but if even more precious troops flee due to this, I will be very troubled, won't I?"

"I already said I don't need any troops! So even if I fail, what will you lose!?"

"Ahhhh. Such a painful expression that Nobuna-sama has, and her blushing face..... As expected she wants Saru to stop her marriage with Nagamasa....." Katsuie starts weeping again,

"Besides, didn't you say yourself you want to kill me!"

"Ki...Killing you is what I want, but asking my men to go ahead with a mission that is doomed for failure will put a dent on my reputation, right?"

"Shut up! Just let me go and build the castle!"

"Ahhh, really, just how dumb are you! Don't tell me you lost all your reasoning due to me marrying Nagamasa? Not bringing any troops to Sunomata, do you know how dangerous it is? If it fails, you will definitely lose your life!"

"Wh-Wh-Wh-Wh-Why am I so anxious? Wh...Wh...Wh ...Who cares about your marriage! I...I...I...I... I am not an.. .an...an...anxious at all."

"You see your face, it's as red as a Japanese monkey!"

"Damn! Isn't that due to my anger! Who is the stupid princess that makes me so angry that my whole face turns red ...."

"Uwahhhhh. The two of you... Why is the relationship between you guys so good... Ever since she decided to marry with Nagamasa, Hime-sama has been sighing all day.....To think that she can be so spirited... Ahhhhhh~~! "

Katsuie, making a scene from her weeping...

"With this standard, going to Kyoto to form skits should not be a problem....." Inuchiyo nods to herself at

the side. "Ah, Onee-sama and Saru-kun's quarrel begins yet again. When will it end this time?"

"This might be Hime-sama's last period of peace, just let them quarrel it out." Nobukatsu and Nagahide whisper among themselves.

"Saru, I won't stop you since you've said too much! But , don't count on me to send you any reinforcements!"

"Ohh, I don't need any reinforcements! Even if I'm surrounded by the enemy, you definitely can't send anyone out! And you must never ask that bastard Nagamasa for any troops!"

"Huh? Don't kid yourself! Why must the great me help you to that extent!?"

"The reward, don't you forget about it!"

"You sure are noisy. That kind of thing, wait till you have conquered Inabayama castle!"

"Hmph!"

"Hmph!"

The two are staring at each other, quarreling to the point where their faces are almost pasted together.

From their point of view, this might just be their last quarrel, their hearts are filled with longing.

But, there isn't any more time to waste.

In the end, both of them turned their backs to each, and parted with a snort.

Returning to his small house, Yoshiharu gathered Goemon and the Kawanami clan and explained to them his once in a life time gamble, the plan of "Sunomata Ichiya Castle"

"Sagara-shi, having too many desires isn't a simple thing." Goemon said with a deep meaning.

"Goemon, was Ando-jiisan found in the end?"

"I've separated the Kawanami clan to a few parties, and they are currently searching."

"Don't tell me he has been finished off...."

"If he was killed, Asai-shi will forever be treated as Takanaka-shi's enemy, so I think he won't~nya."

"I see... That makes sense."

"Anyway, Nobuna-dono seems very angry. Now we don't even have troops, cyan(can) we do it~nya?"

It seems like Goemon's habit of biting her tongue can't be cured.

"But what do we do with Takenaka-shi that the Kawanami is prothecting(protecting)? The strategist that we finally have, doHn't (don't) tell me we are not hoing(going) to use her~nya?

"Yeah. In the end Hanbei-chan used to be under Yoshitatsu, I don't want to add to her troubles."

"Sagara-si is too doting on Takanaka-si."

"And, I have the confidence to succeed with just us."

"Hmmmm. There must be a plan then, Sagara-shi."

"Of course, Goemon."

Goemon's assistant, the bulky leader Maeda, threw Sunomata's map at Yoshiharu and said fiercely.

"Now we can be warriors right, mister?"

Because this mission concerns Nobuna's greatest dream, Yoshiharu did not back down at all.

"Yeah. I will definitely recruit all of you as warriors. But I must say first, the job this time might be fatal, will you do it!?"

The macho men with Maeda as lead celebrated.

"Of course we'll do it! Besides us, who will protect our leader!"

"Leader's fair and smooth skin!"

"Not even a scratch!"

"Will be there!"

"Hey, why are a bunch of macho guys with evil faces all lolicons!?"

Yoshiharu explained the whole plan in simple terms.

"This plan was originally by Tokichirou-jiisan, but we are going to change to a two-by-four method to implement it.

"Tool?"

"Bye?"

"Pho....?"

"In the world I live, this is a very common way of construction. In this world, for construction, you always build it from the ground up right? That's why it's too time-consuming. The so called two-by-four method, is to build the construction materials somewhere else, and then think of some way to assemble them together. If that's the case, building a fortress in a day isn't such a big deal."

"What a brilliant plan, but..."

Goemon tilts her small head.

"Such heavy parts, how are we going to transport them to Sunomata?"

"This will need the strength of you the Kawanami people. After using the wood to build the parts in the upper part of Kiso river, we will transport them with rafts. This should be pretty easy for you thieves right?"

In this era, the river current of the Kiso river is slightly different, and Sunomata lies right in the middle of the intersection of the Nagara river and Kiso river.

Maeda let out an angry voice.

"Mister, don't ask such an impossible thing. Kiso River is famous for its rapid currents!"

"Yeah! We might just lose our lives!"

"It is easy to plan it out, but doing it is a different thing all together!"

Goemon suddenly snaps her fingers.

"Uhhh. By using the rapid currents of Kiso to transport parts, the speed of building will be further indreased(increased). What a brilliant plan, Sagara-shi."

"Yosh, the leader bit her tongue again!" Maeda and his team starts to clap and cheer.

"Yes yes, what a marvelous plan!"

"Mister, you sure are a genius!"

"Our lives are all yours now, mister!"

"Don't you bunch of lolicons have your own opinions at all!?"

Just like that.....

The famous legend of "Sunomata Ichiya Castle" unfolded right here.

The high speed plan of building the castle frame and the arrow tower at the upper drifts of Kiso river, then transporting them to Sunomata during the night, and finally assembling them together.

Kinoshita Tokichirou's name would be remembered throughout the different warring states with using this plan, starting the route of his exciting life.

But, will it be that smooth?

If it failed, what awaits him is only death. His own life isn't important, but if it happens, Nobuna will be snatched away by Asai Nagamasa.

"If that's the case, there won't be any meaning for me to come to this era.....I've taken an oath; that girl's dream, I will definitely fulfill it for her! Asai Nagamasa said it before: for girls, just using the word dreams will have them listen to you."

But, Yoshiharu didn't think so.

Doing that is a mistake. It definitely is.

What a girl really wants is never something cheap like sweet talking. Just purely letting the opposite party immerse herself in dreams, that is not a thing true men should do. A dream is something that should be fulfilled. For a girl's dream, you should have the resolve to even forsake your life.

In the shade of the night, Goemon and party left for Sunomata on a raft. Yoshiharu's heart was hammering in his chest like never before.

"The same time tomorrow, Nagamasa and Nobuna will hold their wedding at Komakiyama. That gives us almost no time at all. Can we really conquer Inabayama castle in just one day?" Yoshiharu is terribly anxious.

"Damn, I'm so nervous that I can't feel my limbs.

"Hehe. During periods like this, just write the character of 'man' and swallow it~nya."

"Ohh, it's here again, the leader bit her tongue again!"

"So unbearable!"

"I became a bandit for this exact moment!"

"Why are you people always like this! Quiet down a little!"

At this era, the Kiso river has a terrifyingly quick current, Yoshiharu almost fell from the raft a couple of times. It's lucky that Goemon managed to always hold him back by hugging him tightly, a bright blush on her face every time. But the Kawanami macho men gang were always quick to let out their nasty "Die!" "Go and

rot in hell, Sagara Yoshiharu!" "How dare you get hugged by the leader's small hands....Oh...how envious!" sentiments as well.

"Sagara-shi. We have reached Sunomata.... Let's get it up pefore(before) the sun comes up!

"Yes, mister, let's get this castle up in one go!"

"....Right. From now on, time is of the essence!" Yoshiharu said in a small tone.

I will not give anything up.

It has started.

Sunomata Ichiya Castle

First, we should use the fence and round up the perimeter, and then assemble the buildings that will be used to defend against any Mino attack.

There's only the Kawanami people on his side.

The construction progress began unexpectedly smooth ,

But, it seems like their luck has ran out.

Once the sun rose from the east, the construction party was completely revealed to the Mino army at Inabayama castle.

"Oh no!"

"If we allow them to build the castle up, all will be gone!"

In an instant, the panicking Mino army rushes at them like a flood.

An army of 1000, 2000 no, as many as 8000 men strong.

At the face of the 8000-man army, with Nobuna not sending out any reinforcements at the back.

"Tokichirou-jiisan just needed to build this castle, but I need to conquer Inabayama castle too. I must think of a way to delay the Mino army to create a chance for Nobuna to attack Inabayama castle."

Yoshiharu who had climbed the watch tower shouted " Now is the critical moment!" while the enemy troop's arrows flew by his head like a bunch of bees.

"What do we do, mister. Estimated time to completion is less than an hour!"

"Even if the fence is strong, the difference in our number of troops is just too big. If the enemy use all their strength to attack, it can't hold!"

"Just a little bit. Put in more effort, the castle is about to be completed now! Then, Nobuna will use this opportunity to attack the empty Inabayama castle."

"But mister, if this goes on, we're gonna lose our lives!"

"Yes, we should retreat now!"

"Hurry and retreat!"

At this instant, his ears rang out Asai Nagamasa's irritating laughter. Even though he didn't want to give up anything..... he couldn't do it. In the end, it's just a kid's bashful and immature action.

"Sagara-shi. I will think of something here! Go now!"

Goemon takes out a ninja blade from her back and jumps down the tower and into the enemy formation.

She throws a smoke grenade onto the incoming Mino army and starts slashing her way in.

"Uwahhhh, leader! Are you trying to let leader die!?!!?"

"No matter if the enemy is thousands or ten of thousands, I will definitely stop them here!"

"Guys! Right here is the best chance we bandits can become warriors, charge!"

"Uwahh, where the hell did all of you people's personal opinions go!?"

The Kawanami clan may be good in guerrilla techniques, but in the end the numbers were too overwhelming.

On top of that, more than half of the Kawanami clan are still building the castle. No matter how strong Goemon and her people are, it's too reckless to stop the Mino's army of 8000 men.

"Wait Goemon, don't die so easily!"

Yoshiharu lifted his spear and rushed to the battlefield too, trying his best to dodge the enemies' attacks and cover Goemon.

Though he hates fighting, Yoshiharu didn't want to abandon Goemon.

"This whole situation is just me being selfish; how can I let you die for such a reason!"

Yoshiharu swung the spear with all his might, as if using up all the strength in his body.

"Goemon!"

"Da...Danger, Sagara-shi!"

The sound of the musket going off...

No matter how skillful Yoshiharu is in dodging, he can never dodge a musket bullet.

"I'm going to get hit." Yoshiharu shut his eyes, thinking all is over, but the bullet mysteriously never hit its target.

".....Uhhnyaa..."

Goemon came in between the bullet and Yoshiharu.

While opening his eyes, the small body of Goemon falls into the arms of Yoshiharu.

"Go...Goemon?"

"......Sagara-shi.....Are...Are you alright?"

"Goemon.....! Don't die!!!!!!!!!!!"

".....It's ok like this....As expected... It's not a good thing to desire so much....."

"Oi, Goemon! This isn't real, right? Don't scare me, Oi!?"

".....As a man.... there will be a day.....where you must have..... the strength to choose, Sagara-shi....."

".....Goemon?"

No reaction.

It's as if Goemon was sleeping while her eyes were closed. Yoshiharu hugged Goemon's small body and shouted like a maniac, "It shouldn't be like this.....!"

In the game, history wasn't like this.

We even built the castle in a day, yet it didn't succeed.

Goemon, the one who believed in him the most, died just like that in his arms.

"Even though I knew the way to build it from the start, even though I haven't even cheated, don't tell me Sunomata Ichiya castle can't be built.....!?"

Goemon had died for him.

As expected, I don't have the talent to replace Tokichirou-jiisan.

As expected, I can't fulfill Nobuna's dream.

To protect Nobuna's dream, I've lost Goemon... To want something, one must lose something first. This might be the law in this era.

But, I myself am still living in this world!

Even if I'm the last one standing, I won't give up. This is the battle for Goemon!

Yoshiharu roared and ran, all the while carrying Goemon's small body, rushing towards the 8000 men strong army.

"Damn! You bunch of bastards!!!!"

The result of not wanting to give anything up, might just mean having to give everything up.

But, at that moment...

"Ta...Takenaka Hanbei Shigetora, under the name of justice..... No, more than justice, is here to help.....!"

"Oh~! Zenki pays his respects!"

"Gouki pays his respects!"

"The twelve heavenly knights pay their respects! The names are too long though, so we won't report it!"

"He...He...He...Head of Mino three, Ando Iga is here to help because I've other choice... *Sob sob*"

Hanbei, leading the rest of the Kawanami clan is once again on her small pony, while commanding the troops. The shikigami army as well as the Kawanami who had finally saved Ando Iga started their attack on the Mino army from the back.

"Ohhh....Hanbei, you've betrayed me as expected! You traitor!"

The big bulky man right in the middle of the Mino army, Saitou Yoshitatsu stares at Hanbei, and shouted.

But Hanbei did not cry, nor show a hint of fear.

With ease, she commands her troops to attack using the eight diagrams battle array, while she herself served as the vanguard against the Mino army.

"Although I'm indebted to you, I've decided I will contribute all of my knowledge and strategies to Yoshiharu-san! Even if I have to bear the name of traitor, I won't regret this!

Hanbei, the young girl who was usually so scared of macho men, was acting as if she was a different person. She was exuding lots of confidence and passion on the battlefield.

The Mino warriors had already experienced themselves the Hanbei's talents as a strategist and her strength as an Omyouji. They were all shocked by the turn of events and fell back on the ground dumbfounded .

Hanbei had even played around with Nobuna, who had defeated the strongest bow, Imagawa Yoshimoto, as though she were dealing with a child. Considering that she just conquering Inabayama castle with only 17 subordinates as well, Hanbei's reputation had already spread throughout Mino.

Plus, with the selfless heart which returned the fortress untouched back to Yoshitatsu, she can be called an unparalleled general.

But this same Hanbei, having the resolve of becoming a traitor, risked herself to save Sagara Yoshiharu who is still an unknown vice-captain.

The Mino army goes into total disarray after the assault of Takenaka Hanbei and Ando Iga, and Yoshitatsu's base is immediately broken through by Hanbei's shikigami army. The soldiers lost all their morale, and even their battle formations were messed up.

"To think that even Ando Iga has.....", Yoshitatsu gashed his teeth.

"Ando Iga! You are also one of the people who benefited from getting the throne back from my father. How dare you betray me!" "I...I...I Ando Iga had no intentions to betray! Definitely not! Bu...But, Hanbei... Hanbei....."

Looks like after getting saved by Hanbei and the Kawanami clan, Ando Iga was totally swept away by his own niece's determination, and had to agree to stand on Yoshiharu's side, albeit unwillingly.

The head of the Mino Three has surrendered to the Oda!

This news spread like wildfire to the other two of the Mino Three.

The one called "Stubborn like a rock" by his peers, the stubborn Inaba Itetsu.

And the one without any nickname, the muscled old man Ujiie Bokuzen.

Both of them aren't people that are easily swayed by the situation, but both of them had immense respect for Hanbei. Luckily, neither of them are lolicons. No matter if it's the brilliant strategies that repelled the fierce Oda army both times they attacked, or the gracious act of returning the fortress untouched, all of it had scored high points towards Hanbei. Both of them had determined that if she met a suitable master, Hanbei would definitely calm this sengoku era and become a person that fits the name of "Current Zhuge Liang".

It's a pity that Yoshitatsu does not have the capacity for Hanbei.

If Hanbei disappeared from this world, this era might just remain like this. Once both of them thought of this, they sighed together.

But after looking at Hanbei now, "After knowing that they are outnumbered, Hanbei still tried to help. It seems like this Sagara Yoshiharu is quite capable."

"Look, Hanbei's expression, she's almost like a different person. It looks like she finally met her true master and flew to the sky!", the both of them whispered to each other and start to change sides against Yoshitatsu .

"Inaba Itetsu, will fight for Sagara-dono right now!"

"Ujiie Bokuzen Naomoto, will join Sagara-dono too!"

With this, the troops from both sides are almost even.

No, Yoshitatsu who had lost all morale is now under an immense disadvantage.

But even in this situation, Yoshitatsu still shouted "I'll fight it out with you!" The 6 foot 5 inched tall man swung his sword like a demon and beat the incoming soldiers into the ground.

Hanbei rides her pony in the battlefield while dodging repeatedly, finally running into the almost completed Sunomata castle. Yoshiharu also swung the spear in his hands while covering Hanbei back to the castle.

"Gu...Guys! I will now set up the eight diagrams array with this castle in the centre!"

"Hanbei-chan, thank you so much! But, Goemon....."

"Yoshiharu-san, all living beings die. Please leave your sadness for later. Now we must think carefully how to live on."

A slightly pale Hanbei used her whole strength and shouted to Yoshiharu. On her small face, there was a never before seen loneliness.

But what is the reason behind the expression? Yoshiharu did not have the time to think about it on the battlefield.

Both armies clashed fiercely in this small battlefield, and soon the day reached afternoon.

"I will definitely not lose! Only I am fit to be the master of Mino! No matter if it's Otou-sama or that foolish princess, as long as I have one breath left, you people will never take Mino away from me."

With his huge monster-like body and his fierce determination, Yoshitatsu managed to gather up the confused Mino army and get them into formation.

"If we let the enemy in front of us escape, we will definitely be swallowed whole by Yoshitatsu." Such a fear forces the soldiers of the Mino army to launch an offensive again and again.

"Yoshitatsu abandoned his human exterior and changed into a monster. He won't listen to anything we say."

Hanbei had used all her strength. The long duration of the battle had caused a huge burden to her small body seeing that she is coughing non-stop on her stool.

"Are you alright, Hanbei-chan? If you're tired, rest for a while first."

"......No. We can't back down anymore."

"Though it's like this, don't force yourself."

But.

No matter how Hanbei tried to command,

Yoshiharu's troops at Sunomata are slowly getting pushed back by the Mino army.

Just when the gates of Sunomata were almost being broken through...

At the back of Yoshiharu comes an ever so familiar voice....

"Sunomata castle is almost complete! Guys, full force onto the Mino army!"

Wearing her foreign styled armor, the leading Nobuna rushes over.

"This girl.....! Why did she come? Go and attack Inabayama castle! What the hell are you doing!?"

Following Nobuna close by.....

"To recover the reputation for failing to build the Sunomata castle, Shibata Katsuie pays her respects! Follow Hime-sama and attack~!"

"Owari's bishounen, Oda Nobukatsu is here! Saru-kun, leaving me alone is rude of you, isn't it!?"

"Looking at the overwhelming stance of the Owari Army, the Mino army is starting to panic. 93 points."

"....Bullying Yoshiharu is unforgivable. Won, Won[23]!"

The full force of Nobuna, Owari's full army crossed the river in unison and entered Sunomata with style.

Unexpectedly, the Oda army seems unstoppable.

What can the Mino army do but tremble.

Saitou Yoshitatsu, while commanding the Mino army, was stunned by the scenery in front of him. He was mumbling to himself "How can this be? Supporting Sunomata with her whole army? Isn't she going to attack Inabayama castle!?"

The cunning Yoshitatsu had left quite a number of troops in Inabayama castle. Though Nobuna is skilled in upfront battles, she is weak in besieging castles because her troops are obviously small in number. So even if he separated troops to attack Sunomata and guard

Inabayama castle, he was confident of defeating both sides. That's what Yoshitatsu had planned.

But if this goes on, he himself as the general might just fall in Sunomata.

If that's the case, the troops at Inabayama castle can only surrender.

"Is...Is...Is...Is this...this the so called, being done in by myself?"

In such a situation, one can only abandon the battle and retreat.

"Give Sunomata up, and guard Inabayama castle!"

Saitou Yoshitatsu hurriedly retreated.

Building a castle in one night is just too crazy. It's just pure nonsense. Did Oda use magic? Or could it be an idea by his godfather, Dousan?

Yoshitatsu gashed his teeth in anger.

"The intelligence of Viper and that foolish princess, don't tell me they can really win against me.....!?"

Towards his godfather who had always belittled him due to his height and size, Yoshitatsu has always wanted to prove that he is a much better successor than Oda's foolish princess.

For the Mino people who had always been unable to accept outsiders, Dousan used Yoshitatsu who is the proper descendant of the Toki clan, making him easier to be accepted by the people. After taking over, Yoshitatsu has scrapped away all of Dousan's reformations, and the people had more or less accepted him.

As for commanding troops, he should have learned Dousan's strategies.

But even with all these, he can't win against that foolish princess?

Is Dousan's evaluation spot on?

If that's really the case, then why was he even being nurtured to be the successor of the Saitou clan?

A nightmarish reality strikes Yoshitatsu hard.

"Sagara Yoshiharu's Sunomata Ichiya castle" became a legend.

The whole fortress was alive with cheers due to this victory.

With blood splattered all around, Yoshiharu carrying Goemon kneeled and paid his respects to Nobuna.

Hanbei let out a big sigh of relief due to the sudden victory and shouted "No...No...No...Nobuna-sama is so scary... I don't wanna see her... Ahhh...." and hid in the watch tower.

Looks like that weak character won't be cured that easily. When she was commanding the troops and leading Inaba Itetsu and Ujiie Bokuzen to Yoshiharu's side, Hanbei had tried her best.

But, Yoshiharu looked onto Nobuna with dead eyes.

"Why are you here Nobuna? Didn't I tell you to attack Inabayama castle!? You really want to marry that sissy, huh!?"

"Hmph! Though I do want to abandon you, I suddenly changed my mind. You have good luck, Saru."

"But....."

"I... am the same greedy person you are. No matter if it's Sunomata or Inabayama castle, I want both of them. I am just the sort of person who keeps a 'no giving up' policy."

"Ma, Yoshitatsu must have left quite a number of troops in the castle... The Mino army was much smaller then expected."

Yoshiharu's life was saved.

But, Goemon who is on Yoshiharu's back is.....

".....Anyway, Sunomata castle, I have built it according to our promise."

"I see(dearuka). That ninja, it seems like it has been too hard on her. I'm very sorry too."

"Ahh. War, as expected, does kill. What a horrible thing it is....."

".....I guarantee. I will pacify this messed up world. And change it to a country that will never have wars again."

"The number 1 Nobuna promising something like this to me, is it going to start raining next?"

"Saru....this isn't your fault. It's all my responsibility for giving the order. Cheer up."

"Ahh. I know. But even though I know, the tears in my eyes... I just can't stop them."

"You snotty brat, how can you consider yourself a warrior?"

At the corner of the unforgiving Nobuna's eyes, there was a slight glimmer too.

But, at that moment.

Goemon who was carried by Yoshiharu, opened her eyes and stretched her back like a cat.

".....Uhhnya....Sagara-shi, hurry and surround Inabayama castle now. Now iys(is) the exact opportunity to strike!"

"Eh, Goemon!? Didn't you die from the bullet.....!?"

"Ninjas often wear armor beneath their clothing. I can still bear a bullet or two~nya."

"Hahaha, you worried me to death!!! I thought....!"

"Hehe. For Sagara-shi who has many desires, I should let you experience the feeling of losing something once~nya. Consider this your practice."

"How dare you feign death!? But I'm glad about this too! Come and let me hug you!!! *Snuggle*Snuggle*"

"Wa..Wa..Wa..Le...Le...Le..Let me go, if I was indecently hugged by a guy, I...I... Uhhnya~~!"

"I don't understand anything you're saying, but it's such a good thing that you've survived!"

"Uhhhnya~~! Sagara-shi is very weird~nya! Help~nya !!!"

"What are you intending to do by hugging the leader and snuggling up to her?!" Maeda and his team of macho men were beating Yoshiharu up in a fit of happiness and rage.

"Ou...Ou...Ouchh! Oi Nobuna, stop smirking there and give me my reward now!"

Nobuna took an orange out from her sleeve and aimed it at Yoshiharu's head.

"Take it. For a monkey like you, an orange as a reward is enough."

"Damn!!!!! What kind of reward is this! You just like to play with me like a monkey! Where did the promise of the reward go to!?"

"Don't forget yourself. The reward, wait till you conquer Inabayama!"

"After you've gone and run all the way here, where do we find the time now!?"

"Hmph! You stupid Saru. I can't bear with you anymore!"

Nobuna closed her eyes and, with a joyful look, she revealed her crystal white teeth.

Her rarely seen smile once again spread across her face .

"Go Saru! If you don't want me to get snatched away by Nagamasa, conquer Inabayama castle by nightfall."

"Oi! Will you die if you increase my wage just a bit!? You miser! I'll remember this!!!"

Like a streak of lightning...

Nobuna leads the army towards Inabayama castle while Yoshiharu followed closely behind.

Katsuie who had just finished preparing for the customary celebration party, grabs her spear in a panic and shouted, "Damn, I totally forgot about the matter of marriage with Nagamasa! Ev...Ev...Ev...Everyone, follow Hime-sama now!!! The celebration can be delayed until we have conquered Inabayama castle!!!"

Hanbei who poked her head out from the watch tower , gave out a sigh of relief after seeing that Nobuna is gone .

".....Yoshiharu-san is really a busy man, huh."

Goemon who was handling the pony while waiting for Hanbei gave a smile behind her mask.

"But he's still a big pervert. It's gonna be tough to be under this sort of guy, Takenaka-shi."

"Such a person is exactly the sort that's worth following", Hanbei laughed out too.

It isn't long before the marriage between Nagamasa and Nobuna.

"This is the final battle between Mino and us! We must definitely conquer Inabayama castle by today!"

Because Takenaka Hanbei and the Mino Three has defected to Oda, Saitou Yoshitatsu had to increase his defenses and guard Inabayama castle. But due to Oda's general, Shibata Katsuie's weird slogan "We must recover our reputation today!", the Oda army conquered Mount Kinka's south side, Mount Zuiryūji's fortress in an instant .

The surrounding bases were all taken over by the Oda army one by one, and the Inabayama castle was surrounded totally by Nobuna's army, with all of Mount Kinka lit up by fire torches.

In just half a day, Nobuna had conquered up to 90% of Mino.

The only piece left is the isolated Inabayama castle on Mount Kinka.

"But even though there won't be any reinforcements, it's still a fact that Inabayama castle is impenetrable.

While looking at the promised time with Nagamasa getting closer and closer...

Nobuna's small lips formed a (¯ ^) shape again, and she gathered her retainers to discuss.

"We won't make it in time by just relying on brute strength. But if there is someone who can sneak inside Inabayama castle and open the gates from the inside, we might just..... Is there a volunteer?"

"The chance of survival is just 30%. Let me go then."

"Hime-sama will not give this to Nagahide! Just let me go for this mission!"

Niwa Nagahide and Shibata Katsuie both volunteer to be the suicide squad, but with Nobuna's "If both of you died, I would become very troubled, wouldn't I?", they were rejected.

"Uwaahhh~ Hime-sama will definitely send that damn Saru to be in the suicide squad~ So biased~ There isn't any doubt on it~!"

"Katsuie-dono, just give up on this. 7 points."

On a side note, upon the words suicide squad, Nobukatsu had long been scared stiff while mumbling " A....A bishounen like me, though I'm skilled at cross-dressing, I'm totally useless in terms of mountain climbing", and was stared at by his own sister.

Maeda Inuchiyo let out an "Uhhh" and raised her small hand, but was pressed back down by Yoshiharu silently.

"You have been silent until now, Saru."

"A last minute military meeting is useless, isn't it? I'm here for this exact moment, right?"

"Hmph. You are lucky to be alive after Sunomata. The heavens won't be so kind to you twice in a row."

"Ahhh~ It's like this after all~~" Katsuie began to weep again.

"Though I'm not the one who thought of it, there is a way."

"Really? Don't tell me you are imagining things because of the reward"

"Che, you are irritating. Just believe me this time."

"......I got it. Even if I stop you, you'll still go."

"You do understand me."

"Hmph. To do things to such an extent. You sure want to snuggle with the world's no. 1 bishoujo....meaning me. .. What an ambitious ero-saru."

"Don't...Don't you get the wrong idea. I just want to give a good lesson to that fake Saru from Omi!"

"How rare. I think the same too, will it rain later?"

The sun was setting soon.

It's no longer the time to tell jokes.

Yoshiharu stopped Inuchiyo who was saying "I'll follow you", and parted from Nobuna with the words "I will now sneak into Inabayama castle and open the gates. "

"Damn. Even when I know that there is a low chance of survival, I'm not afraid at all. Looks like even the great me is shaping up as an accomplished general."

Yoshiharu who was praising himself was hit suddenly at the back of his head. After looking carefully, it's the calabash that was always hanging on Nobuna's waist.

This calabash which was used by Nobuna to be her water bottle and never left her side, and had her name carved in it too.

"That hurts! What the hell are you doing!?"

".....Hmph! There isn't any water source in Mount Kinka. If you're thirsty, just drink the water from the calabash."

"Remember this, the promise of the reward, you must fulfill it!"

"Yeah. Only if you came back alive."

Nobuna smiled with a hint of arrogance.

Yoshiharu smiled with her.

"Ahhh, that damn Saru and Hime-sama was passing glances at each other? What kind of weird atmosphere is that!? Damn that Saru. If you dare touch that calabash with your lips, you are dead!" The fuming Katsuie shouted out loud while crying.

While moving towards Inabayama castle, Yoshiharu had long ago asked Hanbei about any "secret tunnels" into the fortress.

"There are heavy defenses guarding the southern and western side. But if you climb the cliff from the northern

side near the Nagara river, you will be able to get inside. The cliffs are hard to get to, and not even the beasts dare to go near. Are you still willing to go?"

"I used up all my talismans in Sunomata, so now I'm just a useless brat. If Yoshiharu-san still wants to go, you will most likely lose your life. But...."

"But I must still go regardless. You told me about where the secret tunnel is because you knew this, right? Thanks."

Yoshiharu patted Hanbei's head lightly and joined the military meeting.

And then with just himself, Yoshiharu starts on the journey towards the secret tunnel.

To be more discreet, only Goemon herself followed him.

In the end, this was a gamble.

"Sorry about this Goemon, having you to accompany me every time."

"Don't be so reserved. I too don't want to see the depressed Sagara-shi after seeing Nobuna-dono getting snatched away by Asai Nagamasa."

"I...I...I...I won't, I don't care about Nobuna! I just can't see eye to eye with that sissy Asai Nagamasa and want to teach him a lesson!"

"......Hehe. Let's go then."

Yoshiharu and Goemon started on the first cliff, relying on each other to check the surrounding situations .

Though the security is light, occasionally there are patrolling soldiers.

But, those patrols are.....

"Waaaaww, Waaawww~"

"Wa, tiger! There are tigers in the mountain!"

"It's a tigress!"

Maeda Inuchiyo acted out a few roars with very little motivation to attract the enemies' attention.

In Inuchiyo's heart, it seems like she was thinking *Uh... .Inuchiyo wants to climb the mountain too* and was throwing a tantrum.

It's almost time to the deadline.

"Hasn't Saru given the signal?"

While looking up at Mount Kinka, Nobuna shook her leg in desperation.

Though her heart was anxious about Yoshiharu's safety, her mouth was saying "What a useless Saru."

Katsuie was following close to Nobuna.

"Hime-sama! Look! That's Hime-sama's calabash."

At the peak, there was a flash of light.

This was caused by the calabash that Nobuna had lent to Yoshiharu.

Yoshiharu had tied the calabash on his spear and was swinging it around.

Nobuna stood up from the bench, raised her fist and shouted, "It's our victory, Riku! Now let's start our attack! "

"Uhhh. You damn Saru, shitty Saru! Why is that calabash so shiny? It must be because that damn Saru wants to slowly savor the taste of Hime-sama's precious saliva, he used his dirty tongue and licked all over that calabash! There's no doubt about it! Damn it, I must kill him!!!"

"Riku! I've decided! From today on, that calabash will be the Saru's flag!"

"Ehhhh? Isn't that Hime-sama's treasure!? You...You treasure that damn Saru to that extent, Hime-sama!!!!!!??? "

Niwa Nagahide, whose childhood name is Manchiyo, had laid out a formation at the foot of Mount Kinka.

Surrounding the different gates of Inabayama castle, she watched Nobuna launch her attack on the fortress.

"The wish of conquering Inabayama castle, just a bit more now. Full points!"

From in front of Nagahide, an unknown army approached suddenly.

The flag on the troops are of the Asai clan's.

The young warrior leading at the front was Nagamasa.

"I, Asai Nagamasa, as Nobuna-dono's husband am here to help attack Mino. Once this is over, we will hold our marriage right here."

Whether he is really here to help or not can be seen just by looking at his people. With the small amount of manpower and only the essential items needed for the wedding, he does not look like the usual Saru-kun with his festive look. While heading to Owari, he must have heard of the fact that Nobuna attacked Mino and had besieged Inabayama castle. "If this goes on, the wedding will be off", and he hurriedly rushed over to Mino.

This kind of person is exactly the sort that benefits without doing anything.

And for Nagamasa, there is also the secret of him helping Yoshitatsu take back Inabayama castle.

If he doesn't get rid of him, that plot might be revealed to Nobuna.

The usually relaxed Nagamasa is now panicking all over.

"What, Niwa-dono! Please make way now!"

Unknown to himself, he shouted at the woman in front of him.

But Nagahide displayed her trademark smile and stood in front of Nagamasa, giving no intentions to move .

"Asai-dono, Hime has given an explicit order to me, Niwa Nagahide."

"What is it?"

"This battle is Sagara Yoshiharu's. If any despicable people try to interfere, no matter who they are, kill all of them. No exceptions, even if it's Asai Nagamasa."

The gentle and demure Nagahide starts to emit a strong killing intent. The katana near her waist was held tightly in her hand.

"....If...If you kill me, Asai-clan and Oda clan will be enemies!"

"This too can't be helped. It seems like Hime has decided. For the Oda clan to come so far, it's precisely the result of Sagara-dono's hard work. If his rewards for his own efforts were taken away at the last minute by someone else, Sagara-dono might just regret it for life. Hime must had thought that far."

"....Hmmm. So that means that she is intending to break the promise of marriage between us?"

"If Mino can be conquered like this, I think there isn't a need for that."

"You think the Asai-clan will just ignore these things today? Without the alliance with us, how do you guys plan to conquer the world?"

"Hehe. Our clan's princess is very childish, she dotes on that Saru of hers extremely. If anyone dares to harm

that Saru-sama, I think she might just go into a rage. Then, to say nothing of the Asai-clan, she would not even care about the entire world." Nagahide's face still displayed her smile, but the killing intent emitted from her body has Nagamasa and his soldiers totally subdued. If they continued on, Nagahide will definitely not hesitate to cut down Nagamasa.

"......How can this be, building a castle in just a day, conquering Inabayama castle.....Unbelievable....."

He had used all the methods that he could think of, even the despicable ones. But when he heard that his captive Ando Iga was saved by the bandits, Nagamasa had already developed a vague premonition. In the end, he was finally defeated at the hands of Nobuna and that Saru.

Asai Nagamasa, acknowledging his own failure, halted his troops.

For the matter of kidnapping Ando Iga, he had left instructions in Sunomata. He should be able to hide it, if barely, and Nobuna should not ask anything more.

But for the hidden relationship between him and Saitou Yoshitatsu, he must think of a way to stop him from talking.

Besides, the marriage between Nobuna and himself hasn't necessarily failed yet. Even if Nobuna conquered Mino, if she breaks the marriage pact she will damage her own reputation.

"You should withdraw your forces here, Nagamasa-dono."

".....I understand. But we can't just come for nothing. I must at least have a reply from Nobuna-dono. Our marriage, the alliance between Asai and Oda, will it be concluded successfully? We must have the answer today. "

"Very well. There are times when one needs be gracious. The battle is about to finish. Please come to our base with your subordinates then."

To control the Oda clan and conquer the world, I have not given up yet! Nagamasa whispered and, while bearing the humiliation, nods.

This battle, Yoshiharu won the gamble.

Turning Inuchiyo into Torachiyo[24] and having her prowl the jungles was a huge success. The patrols had all shouted "The tiger had came down" and fled away. Walking the deserted path, Yoshiharu climbed the peak without a single injury while cursing "That damn Nagamasa, marry? Dream on!", and successfully snuck in by dusk.

Goemon, who was walking in the front, threw a smoke grenade to block the guard's view. In the confusion, Yoshiharu opened the castle gate, and through the smoke , he ran to one of the peaks known as "Tengu rock" and swung the calabash attached spear.

After that, everything seemed to happen in a flash.

"Damn, damn, damn that Saru, shitty Saru, lousy Saru ~" The weeping Shibata Katsuie swung the spear in her hand, and with her troops, they charged to the open gates like a flood.

Yoshitatsu, who was at the the middle of the fortress, was shocked at the numerous Oda flags at the front of the gate and with a sigh of "All is over", he finally decided to surrender.

Right here, Nobuna had finally fulfilled her father Nobuhide's dying wish, and had became the new master of Mino.

The first thing Nobuna did as the new master of Mino was to send out a letter to Saitou Dousan, who had retired in Owari, telling him to come to Mino immediately. And due to the Mino Three, confusion in the towns had been controlled at the bare minimum. Mino had been under the leadership of The Viper Dousan for quite a long time, and the towns had been directly governed by Viper himself. With the support of the Mino Three and Viper, Mino obtained Nobuna as a new master and returned to normal within a week. No, after Nobuna restored the policies that Yoshitatsu had abolished, the towns will be doing even better than before.

Besides, in contrast of the rumors that the foolish princess is a tyrant, the Oda army had been well

disciplined. "Those who are rowdy to the villagers will be executed publicly." Such a law was passed down, making the Owari soldiers wary and keeping them from touching the villagers.

"Though there are rumors that she is a scary master, unexpectedly, she's a wise ruler."

"When Nobuna-sama rode past just now, there was a very nice odor."

The town's residents had all welcomed Nobuna.

With a new master, Inabayama castle and the towns were slowly enveloped by nightfall.

Chapter 5 : Gifu

"Eh. Aren't you 'Zenki'? Where did Hanbei-chan go?"

"It seems like Master isn't used to being around rough warriors, so she had me disguise myself as 'Takenaka Hanbei'."

Just that night when Mino changed hands to Nobuna.

Yoshiharu had finally managed to bring Hanbei to Inabayama Castle after quite some effort, but in the end the one who appeared was the fox demon Zenki.

Without much time until the beginning of the reward ceremony, Yoshiharu and Inuchiyo could only bring this fake Hanbei in and reported to Nobuna, who was sitting high up while turning her globe.

"Takenaka Hanbei Shigetora is now here."

".....He...is Hanbei."

"Dearuka"

Under the intense glare of the Oda retainers, Zenki still remains a calm smile, and, using the smooth voice of his,

said, "I am Takenaka Hanbei Shigetora. In the battle of Inabayama Castle, your tactics were truly magnificent, so I am here to express my congratulations."

"Ahh, I see. So, what do you want in exchange for your services?"

Nobuna's face is filled with displeasure.

Zenki maintained his poker face and said lightly, "I did give Sagara-dono quite a bit of trouble. Though I am beginning to understand how capable Oda Nobuna is, I do not mind the thought of aligning myself with Sagara Yoshiharu at all."

"What a rude guy~" The Oda retainers start to whisper among themselves.

"I get it."

Nobuna said while grabbing an arquebus from an aide and without any hesitation, pulled the trigger while aiming at Zenki's forehead.

"Ehhhhh~?!"

The retainers are all stunned. No one had a chance to even react to the quick turn of events, let alone to say " stop it".

"Ah...." Zenki shouted and disappeared with a gust of smoke.

"Woah. Nobuna!? What the hell are you doing!? That's messed up!"

"Saru, the real body of that guy is this piece of paper, right?"

"It's a shikigami."

"You knew of this yet you still brought him here?"

"You, didn't you tell me you do not believe in demons or monsters?"

"Ah, of course I do not believe in them. What we have just seen is an illusion. The real Takenaka Hanbei, show yourself quickly! If not, the next bullet will be yours!"

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Nobuna started shooting at the ceilings, pillars, everywhere around the room.

"Hime-sama, there's a small child hiding here!"

Hanbei, whose teeth were clacking together with a " kachak, kachak" in fear, was held up by Katsuie by her collar like a small cat and brought to Yoshiharu's side.

"Ahh, ahhh, woahh...I...I'm gonna be bullied... Do...Do. ..Don't bully me....."

"What's going on, Hanbei-chan!? Where did the gallant strategist on the battlefield go!?"

Hanbei rushed behind Yoshiharu.

Yoshiharu said "It's ok, It's ok", while lightly patting Hanbei's back.

If she did not use her Shikigami to test the other party, Hanbei would most likely not appear at all.

But this Nobuna in front of them had just seen through Zenki's disguise in one look, and even shot at the Shikigami without any hesitation.

"Yo-yo-yo-yo-yoshiharu-san. Sa-sa-sa-sa-save me.... Th-th-th-th-think of something. *Tremble*"

As the saying goes, weak girls are cute. *I will protect this child,* Yoshiharu couldn't help but think.

"I got it, I got it. Oi, Nobuna, don't swing your musket around in front of other people! The demure Hanbei-chan is crying now, isn't she!?"

"Huh? What 'demure Hanbei-chan'? I thought this brat was a squirrel from Mount Kinka."

"What right do you have to say that about others? Didn't you act like a monkey and run around towns?"

"What, you damn Saru. You like to show your manliness in front of that wild Mount Kinka animal? Do you want to go against me or something!?"

"Anyway, don't just swing your arqebus around your future retainers! Can you take the responsibility if it misfires?"

"You understand don't you? I hate all these Omyoujis or demons. Hmph, it seems like animals do gather together; looks like you guys mix well with each other, huh....."

Reluctantly passing back her arqebus to an aide, Nobuna returned to her seat.

"Ok Hanbei, tell me clearly who you wanna serve. Of course, I have no problems accepting you as my direct aide and letting me train you to death!"

"I...I...I'm happy about your offer, but No...No... Nobuna-sama is too...too...too scary. I...I...I will be bullied ."

"Ah, really? How about going over to Katsuie to swing some swords or thrust some spears?"

"Such a demure brat can never survive in the battlefield! Let me use my hellish training to train you from scratch, Heiyaaaaaa!"

Katsuie who leapt out to the courtyard, swung the long spear at a thick tree, and the latter was cut in half in an instant and fell into the lake.

"De...de...de...de...definitely not. Uhhh, Uhhhhhhhh..... *sob*"

"Hehe~hehe~hehe. In terms of intelligence, she should be with me. Let me teach Hanbei-dono all the devious plans and cunning strategies! What strategists need are guts! Heiyaaa!"

The late Saitou Dousan geezer, lifted a giant rock in the courtyard and threw it into the lake.

"Ahhhhhhh....Uhhh...Uhhhhhh *Sobsob*"

"Ahh, really! Stop scaring Hanbei already! She is crying now!"

While hugging Hanbei's trembling shoulders, Yoshiharu lectured at the overly energetic Dousan and Katsuie.

"In the end, she's an introvert. It's obvious that this kind of brat can never serve under Viper. She did cause a big fuss while serving under Yoshitatsu, right? I think it's better for me to retrain her from the roots."

"Uhhhh. If I can't be together with Yoshiharu-san, I want to retire back into the mountains. Yoshiharu-san, the people in the Oda-clan are bullying me.....!"

"Ah...Ah... There's no helping it. So that's how it is. Can you let Hanbei be by my side and help me out?"

".....so infuriating! It's not impossible. From now on, work hard as the Saru's advisor. But....."

"Ahhh? *Tremble profusely*"

".....Don't hang around Saru all the time! If you dare steal from me, I will shoot a bullet right through your eyebrows!"

"........*Tremble, tremble*"

"Oi, Nobuna, put down that arqebus!!!"

With this, Hanbei can finally stay with Yoshiharu, and is officially part of the Oda-clan.

Nobuna and her retainers were also finally seated, and began their real after-battle review.

At the side of Nobuna sits her "fiancee", his face absolutely uncaring, Asai Nagamasa. But Nobuna too did not care about Nagamasa at all, and goes along with her own after-battle stuff.

First and foremost is the decision concerning the surrendered Saitou Yoshitatsu.

Yoshitatsu, the huge man of 6 feet and 5 inches, had prepared for his death, appearing before Nobuna in a fully white attire and sating in a seiza position.

But that messed up face of his, after showing a serious face, caused Katsuie to laugh out. This caused everyone to whisper to each other.

"Don't laugh, 12 points."

"Riku, this isn't the time to laugh."

"Yes, I'm very sorry!"

"I'm really sorry, Yoshitatsu-sama." Hanbei kept bowing her head and apologizes, but Yoshitatsu said in return, "I got it. It's my fault too for not employing you" and forgave Hanbei's actions.

With a unnervingly sharp glare, Nobuna asked Yoshitatsu, "Saitou Yoshitatsu, what more do you have to say?"

"...I totally lost to you. If you can ensure the safety of my advisors and people, I have nothing else to say."

"Ah, dearuka. You don't plan to ask for forgiveness? If you retire and give up arms, it's not impossible for me to spare your life."

"I'm still a descendant of the Toki Clan; I have my own resolve. Right now I should commit seppuku and die, but....."

"But?"

"That Asai Nagamasa who is sitting at Nobuna-dono's side, in actual fact, he is....."

"Shut up! He is trying to sour our relationship. Hurry and execute him!" Nagamasa roared at Yoshitatsu.

"I'm already prepared to die, so I have no need to lie. Asai Nagamasa, lies and betrayal are a common thing in this era, but your behavior is simply too unsightly."

"Shut up. Nobuna-dono, execute him with haste, please cut off his head now."

Nobuna ignored Nagamasa words and asked Saitou Dousan who is sitting in the corner not saying a word.

"Viper, what is your opinion? You are but a retired man. As such you have no right to say anything about my decisions, but Yoshitatsu is your godson. I don't mind listening to you for a while."

Dousan waved the fan in his hand with an agonizing face and squeezed a sentence out.

"......That fellow is a smart man contrary to his looks. If you release him, he will definitely be an obstacle to Nobuna-dono's dream. Kill him."

Yoshitatsu opened his eyes wildly and glared at Dousan.

"......Yoshitatsu. Your intelligence and your pride as one of the descendants of the protectors of Mino, the Toki clan, caused you to lose your life. In this era, it's a common thing for the new to replace the old. To go against the flow and fail, it's your own undoing."

"Nobuna-dono is the one who truly inherited Otou-san's dream. I had realized that early on. But I also had the pride of being once called Dousan's successor. As one of the two successors who both had no blood relationship, if I could prove my strength and win, it might have been possible to prove that I was a more suitable successor to Otou-san, that's what I thought!"

"If I let you be my successor, I might be absolved from some of the bad things I've done... At least, I once had such naive thoughts, but it seems like such a rash action at the start had caused this dark situation now. Forgive me, Yoshitatsu."

A short silence ensued as both of them used their expressions to communicate.

"......I've been trouble all this while, Otou-san."

Yoshitatsu bowed his head deeply towards Dousan.

"Kill him. Kill my son now, Nobuna-dono."

Dousan used a voice so soft that it was almost inaudible.

Asai Nagamasa was celebrating in his heart.

My plan was not exposed, excellent!

But all the celebration aside, Asai Nagamasa did not feel a bit of happiness.

Because he himself was also one of the sinful sengoku daimyo who had forced his own father to retire.

"Mino's Saitou clan, my Asai clan, Kai's Takeda clan, and Echigo's Uesugi clan. This sengoku era where fathers and sons had to battle nonstop, when will it end.....?"

Unknowingly, Nagamasa said such words lightly from his mouth.

But Nobuna, wearing a face of displeasure, silently shook her head.

"I will not execute Yoshitatsu."

"What? What are you saying, Nobuna-dono? If you don't kill him now, it's like waiting for a disaster to happen. There will be a day he will return....."

"Viper, you've overestimated Yoshitatsu. How can he be the opponent of the great Oda Nobuna!?"

"Naïve. Too naïve, Nobuna-dono! If you are pitying me, then please stop it!"

"I am not pitying you. Aides! Drag Yoshitatsu and throw him out now!"

"Really! To conquer the world, sometimes one must be ready to forgo personal feelings! Nobuna-dono, that naïvety will one day cost you your life!"

"Shut the hell up, Viper! You are but a retired man. Although I did hear your opinions, the one responsible for making the last decision is still me!"

"But.....! Look at Yoshitatsu's eyes. He has no intentions to surrender willingly! If you don't get rid of him now, there will definitely be a day he will stage a counter attack!"

"Enough, throw him out now!"

"Just as Otou-sama said, you will regret it one day" Yoshitatsu mumbled while standing up, and without a word of thanks, walked out of the hall.

Towards such an action, the angry Dousan said "I'm leaving" and left quietly.

In an instant, a heavy atmosphere envelops the great hall.

But Nobuna seems not to care one bit.

"Really, that's why I say geezers have no patience. Everyone, thanks for waiting! Now let's start the long awaited reward ceremony!"

Nobuna clapped her hands and the first to walk up to her is Niwa Nagahide and Shibata Katsuie.

As the one in charge of building Komaki Yamajō and disrupting East Mino daily activities, the accomplished Nagahide was awarded with a mind blowing[25] "year's supply of Uiroumochi", and the bravest Katsuie who participated in conquering Inabayama Castle was awarded with a "Tea set" and "The right to open Miso Udon shops in towns"

"Huh, er, Hime-sama. This tea set seems strange. It looks like muddled up mud....."

"Riku, that tea set is actually top quality stuff taken from the Tang dynasty. Just the price of that is more than enough to buy a country like Mino."

"Ehh, it's that expensive?! Thank you so much, Hime-samaaaa! I, Shibata Katsuie, will definitely use this life of mine to serve you forever!"

"Yoshiharu-san, that tea set isn't worth anything....", Hanbei whispered into Yoshiharu's ear.

Katsuie, that fellow is too easy to swindle. Yoshiharu can't do anything about it either.

"And now, Inaba Itetsu and Ujiie Bokuzen."

"Yes!"

"I will keep both of your lands intact and under your administration. But from now on, you must enforce Otoichi-Onza related policies. Lead Mino from here on and help me in conquering the world."

"We understand, Nobuna-sama!"

"Aiya, we heard Owari's princess is an unforgiving person, but it's a good thing we manage to keep our heads." The two geezers whispered and consoled each other.

"And, that Ando blah blah blah. Come out."

"Damn you, Asai Nagamasa! Nobuna-dono, till yesterday, I was captured and imprisoned by Nagamasa! "

Once Ando Iga was brought forward, he was cursing " Damn it, Damn it" non-stop.

Nagamasa paled and said, "What are you saying?"

"Nagamasa was in cahoots with Saitou Yoshitatsu. He kidnapped me to threaten Hanbei and helped Yoshitatsu gain back Inabayama Castle... Uhhh, why is Nagamasa sitting beside Nobuna-dono!? Don't tell me you are seeing yourself as Nobuna-dono's husband, damn it!"

But Asai Nagamasa isn't a simple person.

Ando Iga is already so angry, so I must never let the incident of Sunomata be exposed.... Nagamasa used his brain and started explaining.

"Because I took care to hide the head of the Mino Three , Ando Iga, the residents of Mino started to spread rumors like 'Saitou Yoshitatsu has started to finish off the interfering Mino Three.' Judging from the results, I would say this also contributed to the other two, Inaba

Itetsu and Ujiie Bokuzen, finally defecting to Nobuna-dono."

"Although full of lies, this reason is good. 73 points." Nagahide is still paying attention.

"You damn sissy, full of lies yet having such a convincing reason." Yoshiharu started to scratch the tatami like a cat while gashing his teeth.

"Oh, so it's like that..... Inaba and Ujiie defecting wasn't from the efforts of that damn Saru." Katsuie chipped in unknowingly.

"So it's like that. Oi, Ando blah blah blah, from now on , as the head of the Mino Three, work hard for me along with your niece Hanbei."

Nobuna does not seem interested and did not ask anything about Nagamasa.

"Oioi, don't tell me you are just going to ignore that Nagamasa bastard?" Yoshiharu glared with all his might.

"Ohh, Hanbei. It's been hard on you letting you serve under the Saitou clan. I've let you down.....!"

"It's ok. Because of Uncle, Hanbei has finally met her own master."

"Is that so, is that so? Hanbei has become strong, huh?"

With this, the efficient Mino Three had finally assembled and become Nobuna's direct retainers.

The Uncle and niece pair hugged each other tightly, while feeling a sense of joy for each other at this new beginning.

With all this, almost all the issues following Mino's conquer were complete.

Yoshitatsu's treatment and the rewards of the retainers are complete, the only things left are the marriage with Asai Nagamasa and the promise of the reward.

This is it.

"For the one who conquered Inabayama Castle, no matter what kind of reward is requested, it will be fulfilled."

Hanbei said aloud the promise with a hint of bitterness , and the time had come for Nobuna to fulfill it.

"From my just and fair judgement, the one who has the right to claim the promise is Katsuie who has accomplished the most!"

"That's right, Hime-sama! I had accomplished the most ! Yay~~!!"

"Hime, this is too unreasonable, 12 points. For the building of Sunomata castle, the defect of the Mino Three and Hanbei, and the suicide squad to sneak into Inabayama Castle, the right to the promise should be given to Sagara Yoshiharu-sama. This is the only choice if the reward is to be fair and just."

With a wide smile, Nagahide seems to understand what Nobuna is thinking and raised such a full mark suggestion.

"Che, there's no helping it, huh?" Nobuna knitted her eyebrows, spit on the floor and turned to Yoshiharu.

"It...It can't be, Hime-samaaaaaaaa~!?"

Ignoring Katsuie who is sobbing on the ground, Nobuna shifted to Yoshiharu's side and approached his face to the point where they can feel each other's breath.

Yoshiharu is so nervous that he couldn't move.

It's been so long since he could look so closely at Nobuna's delicate small face. Such a bright scene in front of him forces Yoshiharu to swallow his saliva.

"Say it out loud, Saru. What do you want. Do...Don't stutter now...."

"....Do...Don't position your face so close. It's hard to say, isn't it?"

"Stop caring so much, just say it when I want you to say it!"

Both of them looked at each other in silence due to being nervous.

From the view of bystanders it was an instant, but to the both of them, it was an unbearably long moment.

Nobuna's face started to show a tinge of red, and her expression was that of almost crying while she looked at Yoshiharu.

"You damn Saru! If you don't say it now, I will be snatched away by Nagamasa! Hurry up, say that you want me as your reward. Hurry up and say it!"

Sounds emitting out slight bouts of tsundere-ism from Nobuna can be heard, but such a sound makes Yoshiharu even more confused as he sinks into a deep helplessness.

He...Hehehe. My reward is you, marry me! If I say such a thing, Nobuna will definitely not know what to do and be confused. Th...Though I have no interest in marrying that stingy, violent brat of a princess, ...isn't... isn't it fine to say such a mind-blowing request to teach Nobuna a lesson....?

At this moment.

At the back of the sweating Nobuna, Yoshiharu saw Asai Nagamasa and Niwa Nagahide.

Asai Nagamasa sneered, his expression saying, "Just a lowly soldier, what a joke to have ulterior motives on the Oda clan's princess."

He was sneering at the panicking Yoshiharu.

Shut up and wait. I will tear that sneer right off of your face. Nagamasa's reaction egged Yoshiharu on, letting him be more and more determined on that mind-blowing request.

But.

On the other side, Niwa Nagahide smiled gently and looked at Yoshiharu.

"Yoshiharu-sama. Please decide using your own eyes and see what's best for Hime."

Using an expression almost like advising, Nagahide spoke wordlessly to Yoshiharu.

"Protect Hime well from the hands of Nagamasa, as well as her dreams. Please choose such a reward."

Such a reward, can it be done.....?

What's there to care about, what I really wish for is.....!

And then, he himself noticed it. At his back, Hanbei has been looking at him from the back silently all this while.

Yes. I had such a promise with Hanbei-chan. I had already said such big words in front of her. How can I force Nobuna into a corner and request her to marry a lowly soldier? With how he is now, he has no such right at all. There is still such a long, almost impossible distance to go before he would be an outstanding general that on equal standing with the Oda-clan's princess.

No matter if it's the world or Nobuna, for Yoshiharu now, they are like the sun in the sky, such a far yet dazzlingly bright existence.

Unknowingly, she starts to feel anxious.

"Nee, Saru. Hurry up and say it."

Nobuna's light breath which comes together with a nice smell from her body floated past Yoshiharu nostrils.

This arrogant violent girl is totally not my type.

Even if that should be the case...

His heart is filled with a sudden desire to steal Nobuna's lips.

I don't care at all if this damn brat is the world's number 1 bishoujo. I do know, this girl, is my.....

Suppressing such a desire in his heart, Yoshiharu said.

".....Nobuna, I don't want you to marry Asai Nagamasa! That fellow does not have one bit of an honest feeling for you!"

"Er, Saru?! What....What...What are you saying!? Here you should be saying....."

"You will fulfill any reward requested, don't tell me you are going to regret it! Listen, what I want for my reward is you rejecting this marriage of yours! Just desserts!"

"I...I...I don't....Er....Er... It's not like that.....!"

"That's a good one, Saru~! Beautiful~! I raise both hands in approval!"

Hime-sama's chastity is finally saved, Katsuie can't help but dance wildly in joy.

"....Considering both of your feelings, this ending is quite regrettable, but the Oda clan has avoided a crisis, 80 points."

Nagahide has long noticed Nobuna and Yoshiharu's hopeless love for each other, and her usual smile revealed a complicated expression.

Asai Nagamasa who was ridiculed in front of everyone walked towards Yoshiharu and Nobuna with a pale face.

"What is this about, Nobuna-dono?"

"Nagamasa. For the one who conquered Inabayama Castle, I promised to fulfill any reward he wants. Looks like this Saru of mine is so jealous of my happiness that he chose to destroy our marriage as the reward. Hehe."

"Hime, your happiness is blatantly showing on your face. At this time, you should be more reserved. 32 points ."

"Nagamasa, this bad luck of yours is well deserved~ Damn Saru, nicely done! You are really a good retainer who thinks of Nobuna-sama. I now see you in a different

light!" Katsuie happily hugged Yoshiharu while twisting his joints.

"So that's how things are now, go back to Omi if there's nothing else, Nagamasa. I'm sorry for letting you run so far."

"What the hell does this mean!? Nobuna-dono, don't tell me you agree to such a dumb reward!?"

"Of course. This is a long decided fact, and the achievements that Saru made are all well known. So Nagamasa, please forget about marriage. If you want to hate, hate this Saru of mine♪♪♪"

Nagamasa thought.

I've lost. I have once again lost totally to this couple. From the start when I came to Owari and proposed to Nobuna, my fate had been decided.

For the dream of conquering the world, Saruyashamaru had even abandoned his own dream.

Yet I've lost to this Saru who refused to give up like a child throwing a tantrum, and this Nobuna who most likely has the same feelings as this Saru.

But Nagamasa's heart relaxed a little.

But.....This is just Asai Nagamasa, No, just Saruyashamaru's feelings.

As a sengoku daimyo, Asai Nagamasa will not back off from just this setback.

But he can only swallow and accept what has happened here.

"If that's the case, the alliance between Asai clan and Oda clan is non-existent! If so, my ambition of conquering the world from Omi will be shattered!"

"If you so wish to have an alliance with me, how about you start to beg me with a better tone?"

"No. If I can't have an alliance formed through blood relations, I can't answer to my father! And, you do not have any other siblings! There is no other possibility for this alliance except through the princess of the Oda clan."

Facing Nagamasa's desperate explanation, Nobuna spoke with a stiff expression.

"Ah is that it? It's no big deal to destroy Omi while on route to the capital, but since you've said it to this extent, it's not hard for me to form an alliance with you. As the proof of the alliance, I will send a princess of the Oda clan to your side. This will be it."

"Uhh....Princess? I...I have no objections....."

"So the alliance is formed then. I will send her over soon, so go back if there's nothing else. And I won't ask anymore about you being in cahoots with Yoshitatsu and kidnapping that Ando Blah blah blah."

Nagamasa nodded obediently. If he had a princess from the Oda clan, it's as if he had a hostage in his hands. With the way the alliance is formed, his father, Asai Hisamasa, should be able to accept it.

"I understand. I hope this time around you will not break your promise with me.....I will convince my father on my side."

"You brought up your father again. Aren't you overly concerned over forcefully making your father retire?"

"As a child, that is obvious."

"Ah, is that so? Placing the same amount of importance in your own father and the world, looks like you are still a child. And such a thing like deceiving females should be stopped.... If you truly want to marry with someone from our Oda clan."

".....Understood."

Asai Nagamasa, even as a sengoku daimyo, has been utterly defeated in front of Nobuna.

"Wanting me to marry you is a bit too reckless. From now on, work hard for my Oda clan as my little brother.

From Nagamasa's point of view, the meaning from Nobuna's words was so hurtful it carved a deep scar in his heart.

Asai Nagamasa could only reach where he was now through the shattered remains of his own dream as Saruyashamaru. But the price for abandoning his own dream.....

I might have lost a bit too much. But now isn't the time , I must not bow down to Nobuna. Now I should accept this humiliation and retreat. There will be a day when he

will return and subdue Nobuna..... The flames of ambition silently burns inside Nagamasa's chest.

His own abandoned wishes, his lost dreams, the feelings he was unable to get across. Without knowing when, their shape had changed in his heart and had become a fiercely burning ambition.

After Nagamasa left, the hall exploded with a wave of cheers.

"My princess is finally safe~! Damn Saru, yay~!!"

"Ge...Get away from me, your tits are suffocating me, ok!?"

"......worth celebrating."

"....I...I seem to be a bit tired....Everyone is being so loud, so scary.....*Sob*"

"A wise decision, Hime. But....."

"Manchiyo. What do you want to say?"

"Inside the Oda family, other then Nobuna-hime, there isn't any other princess left. 1 point."

"Ara, I've been exposed."

"Ahhhhh, that's right!", Katsuie screamed too.

"Wh-wh-wh-wh-what should we do, Hime-sama? As expected, we should just finish Asai clan off?"

"Of course not. Though I displayed such an attitude in front of Nagamasa, honestly Asai clan's Odani Castle is a fortress on par with Inabayama Castle. Conquering it will waste huge amounts of time and energy. If that's the case, going to the capital will be delayed and we might let Takeda Shingen take the lead.

"Takeda Shingen and Echigo's Uesugi Kenshin are battling it out on Kawanaka island. If we miss this golden opportunity to go to the capital, our dream of conquering the world won't be fulfilled," Nobuna stretched her arms and said solemnly.

"Manchiyo, what should we do when there is a situation like this?"

"At such a moment, we should choose a girl with fair looks and accept her as a goddaughter of the Oda clan, and as per customary procedures, marry her to Asai clan.

"That will take too much time. And it's a well known fact that the Oda clan is full of hunks and beauties.... Nagamasa had already seen my face. If I just find any half-assed bishoujo, this will definitely be exposed."

"You have a point."

"Owari is a birthplace of fair ladies. Though there are many bishoujos, I don't think I can find a bishoujo that can match up to my invincible looks....."

Inuchiyo has earnestly raised her small hand to attract Nobuna's attention, but it seems like Nobuna ignored it.

It's a fact that Inuchiyo can be considered a bishoujo, but her looks are totally different from Nobuna; especially when considering her breasts, Inuchiyo is totally a goner.

"Le-le-le-le-le.....Let me go over to Omi then!? If...If...If it's for the sake of Hime-sama, I Katsuie, will not hesitate to even die. Eve...Even if it's to sacrifice my body to a ma. ..ma...man, I will also.... Uhhh, Uhhhhh.....!"

"Riku, I already said that I will be very troubled without you in the army, right? Besides, since when does a princess from the Oda clan have such huge breasts like yours!?"

"Eh.....? Hu...Huge breasts.....!?"

"My downwards and slanted eyes are totally different to Hime-sama too. 0 points," Nagahide has brilliantly been passed too.

"What a headache. Though I do really want to dress Hanbei up as a princess and have it done with, unfortunately that brat is too timid. Goemon always hides her face and stutters too, and the only leftover is Nene who is still young....."

"Hmmm. It's hard to say.....but isn't there Oichi still?"

Yoshiharu turned his head to the side and said hesitantly.

In Yoshiharu's sengoku game knowledge, the alliance between the two clans were formed after Nagamasa married the princess of the Oda clan, Oichi.

But after their alliance broke, Oichi went through a very pitiful life by witnessing her husband, Asai Nagamasa, commit seppuku and die.

Since everyone had all along not said anything about Oichi, Yoshiharu felt embarrassed to ask, his heart filling with unease too.

"Hu....Huh? Who is Oichi? I've never heard of her before."

"Isn't she your little sister?"

"My...My little sister? Manchiyo, what is this about?"

"This...I have no idea too."

"Ye...Yes Yes. Hi...Hime-sama has no sister at all!"

Not knowing why, Katsuie is starting to sweat profusely.

"Saru, I have no siblings other then a brother.... There, that guy who dressed himself like an Oiran[26], the real Owari's fool, Kanjuurou."

Nobuna points to the garden with a face of helplessness. There was that idiot, Oda Kanjuurou Nobukatsu, who is leading his team of girls and shouting "Let's celebrate" while dancing an oiran dance.

"Onee-sama, congratulations! I, Kanjuurou, will stay by your side and serve you for the whole day! Ara, why am I dressed so pretty!? Hahahaha!"

Nobuna quietly gathered her retainers by her side while revealing a dark sinister smile.

".....Saru, Manchiyo, Inuchiyo, Riku....What do you guys think?"

"......Oioi, Nobuna. Don't tell me you.... *Swallow*"

"......It's an exhilarating suggestion, but if it is exposed, Nagamasa-sama will be fuming mad. It's a high risk gamble. 50 points."

"......A man yet being prettier than Inuchiyo. I can't take it..... Agreed!"

"What? Huh, what are you guys talking about? Am I the only...only one not understanding anything!? Uwahhhhh....!?"

"Please marry Kanjuurou-sama to the Asai clan," Hanbei who was hiding behind a pillar suggest with a sobbing voice.

"The both... both of them... will... will... will definitely fit...fit...fit together..."

"What the hell is going on!?" Yoshiharu scratched his head angrily, but Nobuna had already decided on what to do.

"Even Hanbei has suggested it, so it's an all green! Everyone! Hurry up and capture Kanjuurou!"

"Arara, Onee-sama, what kind of a game is this? Hahahaha. Eh? Why am I being tied up with a rope.....?"

Goemon who appeared in a gust of smoke had tied Nobukatsu up tightly like a chicken.

"Oichi-sama, please prepare yourself."

"Arararа, Ninja, who is this Oichi-sama you are talking about?"

"You."

"Eh? But my name is Kanjuurou Nobukatsu....."

"From today forth, you are Asai Nagamasa's wife, Oichi-hime~nya!"

"E~H~!?"

The pitiful Nobukatsu is sent like this in a cage and carried towards Omi.

After beautifully settling the alliance issue with Asai clan, Nobuna's lengthy after-battle review ended. "Now to give the Mino people a fresh start, we should change the name of the castle and town. Are there any nice suggestions?" Nobuna ask the knowledgeable Nagahide.

"In the Tang dynasty, there was an ancient saying of ' King of Zhou, marching from Mount Qi, the world can be obtained'. It means that the ancient King of Zhou assembles his army in Mount Qi and finally obtained the world. Now to show that we have the wish to bring peace throughout the world, how about we change

Inabayama Castle to 'Gizan Castle' and Mount Kinka to Mount Qi?"

"That's a good name, Manchiyo! But the town name being changed to Mount Qi is a bit weird, since that town is actually plains."

"Mount Qi has other names, like Giyou or Gifu."

"Then let's name it Gifu! From now on, this castle will be 'Gifu's castle'! And the town will be 'Gifu's town'!"

"How about Mount Kinka?"

"It sounded great to start with, so it will remain the same."

After deciding on the new name of the town, Nobuna ordered her men to write out the official documents for the new name "Gifu" and stamp a new personal seal of approval onto them.

This seal was carved with the words....

Tenka Fubu.

The scattered world, using military might, to gather all of them into one.

After granting the wish of capturing Mino, Nobuna can finally announce her ambition to conquer the world.

"Finally, we can prepare to go to the capital! We should head to Kyoto, letting the whole world fall under our command!"

"Arara, with this we will make enemies everywhere again." Nagahide gave out a sigh after hearing.

"Someone explain it to me, what do the words in this seal mean?" Katsuie became confused.

"Finally, the moment has arrived....! It's almost time for us to fetch the vagrant general, Ashikage Yoshiaki and move onto the world." Yoshiharu's heart starts burning with anticipation.

This conquest might sound easy, but in truth no one can predict the situation.

"I'm born from Mino's sub tribe of Toki-Minamoto, Juubei Mitsuhide. Ever since Dousan-sama has been

banished from Mino, I have become a vagrant. But now, please allow me to contribute to help restore the Ashikage government."

The young warrior who had walked in is Akechi Mitsuhide.

Her long black hair was tied up tidily at the back, her expression revealing an intense sharp glare. She is a bishoujo warrior that gives people a refreshing first impression.

No matter if it's her actions or behavior, there aren't any extra movements mixed in. This shows that she is extremely well trained. Without even considering her swordplay, she even knows to a great degree the ancient tea ceremony skills that are necessary in Kyoto.

Looking at this bishoujo warrior who is emitting a clean and distinguished aura, everyone can't help but let out "Ohoh" voices of approval.

Unlike the Owari warriors whose heads are full of Hatcho Miso, this girl in front of them is a rare talent.

In this serious and solemn discussion, there is no inkling of a feeling that she will be the culprit of the future "Honnou-ji Incident".

Nobuna mumbled, "I seem to have seen you somewhere," and tilted her small head.

"Ara? Aren't you the aide who was sitting beside Viper in Masanori Temple?"

"Yes, I was once the aide of Dousan-sama."

"Ahh, as expected. If it's Viper, he is retiring at my side . You are now a vagrant, so letting you join our Oda clan is no problem! Now that we went through so much to obtain Mino, we are at a shortage of manpower."

"Yes.....But, I'm not here for a position today, but to inform you of very important news. This news might be a major point in the future of the Oda clan."

"Stop dilly dallying. Say it out now."

Yoshiharu seems to have thought of something and interrupted.

This, this is a major event during the event of Oda clan heading towards the capital.

"In Kyoto, Matsunaga Hisahide, in cahoots with the Miyoshi Three, assassinated Ashikage Yoshiteru! Akechi Mitsuhide arranged for Yoshiteru's little brother, Ashikage Yoshiaki, to be the new shogun, wanting to restore the reputation of the government! But she does not have the military might to defeat Kyoto's Matsunaga and Miyoshi Three, so she had come to the Oda clan and ask for them to head to the capital.... That's it, right!?"

In Yoshiharu's gaming knowledge, Matsunaga Hisahide can be said to be a big villian in the sengoku era . Assassinating his master, killing the shogun, even Nara's great Buddha came under his path of destruction. But, in this world, what evil things will Matsunaga Hisahide do? Yoshiharu does not know. *If even Matsunaga Hisahide is a female, that will be an unacceptable fact,* Yoshiharu can't help but think.

"Oh, so that's it. As expected of Saru, far-sighted, huh? " Nobuna praised.

But the kneeling Juubei said to Nobuna.

"Er....Though it's a bit rude, things aren't exactly like that."

"Ehhhh? How can this be wrong!? In my brain, the sengoku game knowledge....."

"What? In the end, it's all wrong. Damn Saru, that 'blah blah blah' knowledge of yours does have times when they are wrong."

"It should not be possible....."

"Though what actually happened is not far from what he said. From what my spies told me, it's a fact that Matsunaga Hisahide and the Miyoshi Three attempted to assassinate the shogun, Ashikage Yoshiteru. But the wise Yoshiteru-sama knew that he had no chance of winning, left a note saying 'Awaiting for another day', and escaped to the country of Ming[27] with his sister, Yoshiaki."

Ehhhhhhh!?

Yoshiharu is totally confused.

"The current shogun brought the next shogun Yoshiaki overseas!? I haven't heard of this kind of thing at all!

With this, the righteous motive of the Oda clan moving to the capital will..... No, with this, I do not know where the line of history will flow next, and my value will....."

"Be quiet a bit, will you, Saru? Juubei, continue on."

"Roger. With this, the line of Ashikage as shogun will be broken. Ashikage's sub family that was in Kantou is totally eliminated due to the Houjo clan, and no one else can continue as the shogun. If this goes on, the chaos in Japan might continue on forever."

"Juubei, you must have some kind of a plan for you to run all the way here to me."

"Exactly. But there might be risks involved."

Mitsuhide moves closer and whispers to Nobuna.

In an instant, Nobuna revealed a very confused expression, but had come to a decision immediately.

"I get it. I will use this plan, Juubei! Inuchiyo, hurry and get that black teeth[28] princess who only knows how to play soccer!"

"......Roger."

With a high pitched laugh, "Oh, hohoho. Finally, it's time for me to enter!" Imagawa Yoshimoto is brought in front of them.

Though Yoshimoto had said "Having white teeth is more beautiful still" and didn't dye her teeth black, that princess stance of hers is still the same. Ever since surrendering to the Oda clan, Yoshimoto had been living a stress-free life. She did not even retire, and regularly wore that Juunihitoe of hers and wandered around. Everyday, she was either drinking tea, playing soccer, or writing Enka songs, and had totally lived a carefree life.

"Our Imagawa clan is also a sub-clan of the Ashikage. ' If the main clan is destroyed, Nara will inherit them, if Nara is destroyed, Imagawa will inherit'. Now that Ashikage's bloodline had been severed, and the one who was supposed to inherit them, the Nara clan has been destroyed by the great me, the only one left is the Imagawa Clan! And in this clan, the only one left is....' Hokkaido's strongest bow', Imagawa Yoshimoto! Other than me, Imagawa Yoshimoto, going onwards to Kyoto to inherit the position of Shogun, there is no other choice! Hohohohoho!"

Exactly.

Towards Juubei Mitsuhide who observed the rules, she wants to tell Nobuna the fact that "Since now Ashikage main clan's bloodline is severed, the princess of Imagawa clan has the right for the Shogun".

Though Nobuna has totally no interest in such messy things, it looks like "If we let this fellow be the Shogun, we will have the righteous motive to proceed to the capital", and reluctantly agreed.

"Though she is an irritating fellow, if I make Imagawa Yoshimoto a Shogun and eradicate Matsunaga and the

Miyoshi Three, I don't think Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin will have a way to interrupt."

"Yes. Though this princess's behavior is a bit foolish, since we just need her bloodline, there's no problem. There isn't any harm to our side too."

"Ohhohoho. Once I become the new Shogun, Nobuna, no matter if it's Kanrei[29], or vice-Shogun, just choose what rank you like. The great me is a very generous lady. Ohohohoho."

"You are very noisy, you know? Oi Yoshimoto, hurry and stamp your seal on this 'contract'. After this, I will let you be the Shogun."

Yoshimoto asked "what is this?" while taking the document that Nobuna was throwing.

Written on the document was...

Number 1: With the rank Shogun, you will be nothing but a puppet. All official documents going out must have Nobuna-sama's stamp too.

Number 2: The people will be directly ruled by Nobuna-sama. All opposition will be executed without exceptions. If you dare to oppose me, you too shall be executed.

Number 3: You must help the busy Nobuna-sama serve Himiko[30] in Kyoto.

Number 4: Don't use that high tone of yours to laugh foolishly. So noisy.

Number 5: From now on, you must have an open a caring heart towards Nobuna-sama like how you treat your own mother or sister. Respect her every day and do not face your legs in her direction when you sleep.

These 5 totally arrogant rules were listed out in Nobuna's handwriting.

"What the hell is this!? Towards the future Shogun-sama like me, how rude....."

"I said you are just a puppet. Isn't that obvious? Someone who is below me saying things about my decisions should be dragged out and be executed in public. Besides, why haven't you retired!?"

"Ahhhhh....Moto...Motoyasu, Motoyasu~!"

"I'm here~"

Coming from Mikawa to congratulate the conquering of Mino, Matsudaira the tanuki Motoyasu answered Imagawa Yoshimoto's summons, and appeared in front of all of them in an instant.

"I... will definitely not stamp my seal on such a devious contract! Ahh but, such a hostage life that I've been living through, I can only play soccer in such a rundown place.....If I can go to Kyoto and live my life, it must definitely be more grand! Motoyasu! Now, hurry and think of a plan to restore the Imagawa clan!"

"Anyways, just stamp your seal first. We will talk about it once you've become the Shogun. Then there will be an opportunity to nullify this contract~. Hehehehe."

"Haha, as expected from Motoyasu! You sure are cunning! Ohohohoho!"

And then, Imagawa Yoshimoto stamped her seal happily on this demonic contract, almost like selling her soul away.

Nicely done, Takechiyo. Nobuna sent a "Good Job" glance to Motoyasu.

Though her pride is as high as Mount Fuji, she is unexpectedly easy to settle~ Takechiyo answered with a glance too.

"Juubei, in Kyoto your behavior and knowledge will definitely be useful. From now on, work hard under me as a retainer!"

"Roger. I'm honored."

Mitsuhide bowed with a solemn face, but Yoshiharu was still in a state of confusion.

"Lying to this stupid princess to stamp on this slave contract, these two sure are devious.... No, wait, Imagawa Yoshimoto, who should be dead in Okehazama , becoming the Shogun!? This fellow is much harder to handle than Ashikage Yoshiaki! I hope that this won't become a mess....."

From that point in the past, the wheels of history might spin in a very different direction.

"Hanbei-chan once warned me..... If the time comes when my gaming knowledge can't help me, what can I do?"

At this moment, Nobuna mercilessly shouted.

"Damn Saru! Your blabla knowledge has times when it's wrong! This Juubei might just be more useful than you!"

"None...Of...Your...Business!"

Just then.

Mitsuhide sneaked a glance at Yoshiharu's face, and her white face suddenly flushed with a bout of red.

".....Hmmm. You must be that guy who said 'world' in Masanori Temple."

"Oh, I'm Sagara Yoshiharu. I'm in your care from now on."

"What, so you are the rumored Sagara Yoshiharu-sama !?"

Mitsuhide turned towards Yoshiharu immediately and gave a deep bow. "From now on, do take care of me too, Sagara-senpai."

Looking at this serious Mitsuhide, Yoshiharu can't help but feel embarrassed.

"Ah, nono. Such a thing like Senpai....! Our age isn't that different, don't be so reserved! Hahahaha!"

"No, Senpai is Senpai! Sagara-senpai's legendary ' Sunomata Ichiya Castle' is even famous in Kyoto! Senpai had been recognized as the No. 1 general in the country. Compared to Senpai, Juubei is still so far off, so please do guide me along from now on!"

The serious Mitsuhide blushed, and held onto Yoshiharu's hands tightly. After realizing that he is a young man, "Ahh. This.. This is so rude of me!" and released her hands, embarrassed.

"I'm really really sorry, do...doing such a ridiculous act !"

"Ara, so people have been looking at me like that. I will definitely be welcomed in Kyoto. This gives me a headache~"

"Yes, after going to the capital, Senpai will definitely be welcomed!"

The shy Juubei just from her holding hands, and this bright eyes of hers praising her senpai all makes her very cute.

"If it's this Juubei-chan who is so serious and pure, there shouldn't be a thing like a revolt happening." Yoshiharu is a bit relieved.

The second most famous event in the Sengoku SLG game "Oda Nobunaga no Yabou" is the previously finished "Battle at Okehazama".

But the most famous event is without a doubt Oda Nobunaga getting killed by Akechi Mitsuhide's " Honnou-ji Incident".

"Oda Nobunaga, who is betrayed by his own retainer, Akechi Mitsuhide, is at the time only one step away from conquering the world when he committed seppuku in Kyoto's Honnou-ji temple in the midst of flames. His life of ambition is forcibly drawn a full stop.... Kinoshita Tokichirou, who at that time was Hashiba Hideyoshi, was at Chugouku[31] battling with the Mori army.

Shibata Katsuie and Niwa Nagahide had their own armies spread out to battle with enemy countries for the sake of the world as one. So in the end, no help arrived......"

Not mentioning Nobunaga who had transformed into a demon king[32], the Nobuna in front of him, sharp tongued but cute. To let her meet such a pitiful end when she is chasing her dream, Yoshiharu will not accept it even in death.

In Yoshiharu's heart, he had vaguely realized that he was here in this world to help Nobuna escape the " Honnou-ji Incident". But his own brain seems to have been avoiding the topic of Honnou-ji until now.

This is because Nobuna who had almost obtained the world was swallowed in a sea of flames, and not even a hair was left over..... Such a pathetic way of departing from this world. Yoshiharu didn't even want to think about it.

And at that time, he isn't able to be by her side.

The help can't even reach in time.

Just slightly thinking about it, his own chest feels pain enough to rip him apart.

And the fated samurai, Akechi Juubei Mitsuhide, has also shown herself. Now is the time to work towards avoiding the incident of Honnou-ji, Yoshiharu thinks.

".....But no matter how I look, this serious, diligent and pure Juubei-chan will never revolt. I might have over thought things."

Nobuna who is sitting high up, was staring at Yoshiharu and Mitsuhide as they look at each other.

"I must say, what are you guys doing by being so lovely-dovey? Juubei, that Saru is being 'fed'[33] personally by me. If you dare to 'feed' him yourself, I won't be merciful."

"......Roger."

Suddenly, the peaceful atmosphere between Nobuna and Mitsuhide became tensed, but Yoshiharu did not notice this at all.

Even Nobuna herself and Juubei Akechi did not notice it.

No one can predict the fate awaiting the three of them.

"Let's start the feast! Tonight, no one is allowed to go home sober!"

Having come up in the middle of the reward ceremony, this Imagawa Yoshimoto matter was solved after a long debate. Seemingly in an instant, it was already the middle of the night.

Saitou Dousan, whose opinions totally differed from Nobuna's, was sitting quietly at the top of Mount Kinka. At the start, he built this shed to sip his tea quietly, but it had been many years since his last visit. Dousan sits outside of the shed while looking down at the night view of the town below him.

Dousan spent half of his lifetime pursuing dreams like "Capturing Mino, going to the capital, and conquering the world...."

These dreams that were once shattered were fulfilled one by one by his goddaughter Nobuna.

The marriage with Asai Nagamasa was canceled too, and Nobuna's small dream as a girl was protected after much difficulty.

But to let Yoshitatsu escape from her, too naïve. Really, too naïve.

"There will definitely be troubles ahead for this overly sympathetic brat. I'm afraid my mission here is almost done.... Maybe I should find a faraway country and disappear."

If he himself were absent, then Nobuna would definitely have decided to execute Yoshitatsu.

His own existence might be that child's weakness.

And, he had mysteriously begun to cough recently.

How many years he had lived through, Dousan can't help but think.

"You will rot if you stay in a place like this alone, geezer. Hurry and show your face at the feast."

"That's right! Everyone is waiting for the previous King of Mino to appear!"

Letting Nene ride on top of his shoulders, Yoshiharu sat down beside Dousan panting, having climbed the mountain.

"No need. I will just stay here."

"Geezer, don't tell me you are throwing a tantrum? That isn't good..."

"It's because I feel very uneasy over Nobuna-dono's naïvety." Dousan revealed his thoughts without reserve.

Sagara Yoshiharu. Though he is a guy with unknown origins, there is no one better suited to watch over Nobuna. Dousan understands this deeply.

"Geezer, Yoshitatsu might be your godson, but he is still someone you had raised like a son. Nobuna would not kill Yoshitatsu herself. As someone who had chased away the country's lord but kept his son, you must have been thinking of giving Mino back to Yoshitatsu after you have conquered the world, right? This should be another true dream in that heart of yours. So how can she bear to order his execution?"

"This is exactly why she is naïve."

"It's a bit early to think that you are muddle-headed," Yoshiharu laughed.

"Of course, Nobuna isn't so naïve that she would help Yoshitatsu without conditions. If you had said 'Don't kill Yoshitatsu', Nobuna might have executed Yoshitatsu without hesitation. If she did, you wouldn't have to bear the sin of killing your own son."

"I will never let that brat bear such a sin, that child knew about this too. From the start, Nobuna-dono had no wish to kill Yoshitatsu," Dousan thought.

"Dumb. I've got one leg in the coffin already, and as ' Viper Dousan', one or two more sins isn't such a big deal. So naïve."

"You are no longer Viper. Aren't you the same, geezer? If you really wish to kill Yoshitatsu, you wouldn't have left him alive till today. At the start when you named Nobuna as your successor, didn't you try your best to convince Yoshitatsu?"

".....Uh..... Really, it's just as you say. What is this? The thought of finishing off Yoshitatsu silently had never crossed my mind. After entrusting my dream to

Nobuna-dono, all I could think of was to ask for forgiveness from my own godson."

The Viper Saitou Dousan, how naïve he is.

"I wanna pee!" Nene starts to struggle on top of Yoshiharu. "Bear with it, please bear with it!" Yoshiharu calmed Nene while walking off.

"Place yourself in front of a mirror and see. After meeting with Nobuna at Masanori Temple, Geezer had totally become 'Buddha Dousan' already. Nobuna does not want to add to your sins anymore."

"I banished my own master and stole Inabayama's fortress and towns. Why even now..... Looks like Nobuna-dono does hate the sins I committed from the bottom of her heart."

"Huh? What dumb stuff are you saying, geezer? Don't tell me you've really become muddle headed? This fortress and town's new name, read it out yourself."

Leaving these words, Yoshiharu brought Nene down from Mount Kinka, leaving Dousan by himself to gaze upon the scenery.

In the darkness of the night, uncountable lights from the town starts to appear.

At the start it was still a mess of lights, but slowly, it formed a picture.

This picture, is in the form of a snake.

Different from the scary Viper, it's like a funny and cute snake that appears in children folktales.

This should be Nobuna's order, asking the people in the town to light up and form the shape of the snake.

If he had not been at the top of Mount Kinka, he will not have seen such a spectacular sight.

Dousan almost choked on the feelings gushing from his heart, and in a shaking voice, spoke the new name of the fortress and the town.

.....Godfather's Fortress, Godfather's Town[34].

At this deserted shed in the mountains,

Dousan takes out the paper fan from his robes with trembling hands, and quietly covered his own face.

Because the bright moon in the sky is still quietly looking at himself.

Translator's Notes and References

1. ↑ Tsukkomi is the person correcting the boke (funny man) in manzais (japanese talk comedies). More information about Manzai @ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manzai
2. ↑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hikaru_Genji
3. ↑ Pond Noodles sound like gigolo in Japanese
4. ↑ Rosewood sounds the same as char(???)
5. ↑ Guru is the sound of spinning, probably referring to the ladle stirring the soup
6. ↑ [Za] are old trading communities formed by the shrines, daimyo, or people. They monopolize the trading rights of whole cities in the middle ages of Japan. Hence, the abolition of this [Za] policy is called the [Rakuchi] (乐),and the existence of the [Za] itself that has been abolished is called the [Rakuza]
7. ↑ Omiai ~ Marraige meeting, or rather, matchmaking http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miai
8. ↑ Kanpaku is the Chief adviser to the Emperor
9. ↑ Mitoki Komon was also known as Tokugawa Mitsukuni, a daimyo from the 16th century. Do note that he is the grandson of Tokugawa Ieyasu (or Matsudaira Takechiyo.)
10. ↑ Yano Kabuto is a Samurai helmet with two horns

11. ↑ Shikigami are basically familiars for Onmyojis http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shikigami
12. ↑ In Japanese, faking sleep sounds like kitsune, and kitsune means fox
13. ↑ Yoshiharu actually said lady in English here
14. ↑ The original Japanese raws writes お
15. ↑ In here, Yoshiharu said GET in English, and after that, changed back to Japanese
16. ↑ In the chinese raws, 美 translates to artistic talent. But I feel that ideology fits better
17. ↑ The original Japanese raws are う. Which actually translates to, those who chase two rabbits will get neither
18. ↑ Tsuki translates to Moon. She is referring to the moon affectionately
19. ↑ There is no mistake on the translation. Even the Chinese raws are puzzled why is Goemon with Yoshiharu
20. ↑ Dearuka is a special phrase that Nobuna uses, it's being preserved as is for it's many meanings, a common translation includes 'I see'
21. ↑ He said "game" (gemu) in English
22. ↑ Yoshiharu used the world 脳, meaning muscle head literally
23. ↑ "Won, Won":Probably barking sounds from Inuchiyo

24. ↑ Torachiyo is a word play of Tora and Inuchiyo. Tora meaning tiger in Japanese
25. ↑ How can a year supply of Uiroumochi be mind blowing? Even the Chinese translators are questioning this. But taking into account Nobuna's stinginess, it might be so
26. ↑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oiran
27. ↑ China; Ming Dynasty
28. ↑ The original raws states お. In Ancient Japan, distinguished families had the habit to dye their teeth black, Nobuna is hinting that Yoshimoto's birthright and her intelligence is in contrast
29. ↑ か, Muromachi bakufu's highest rank other then the Shogun himself
30. ↑ Himiko is most likely the emperor/empress of Japan, but since most sengoku era daimyos have been sex-changed, the emperor is now Himiko
31. ↑ This Chugouku isn't China. For more information, wiki Chugouku region
32. ↑ The demon king here should not be taken literally . The actual raw states, 第, which literally translates to the sixth demon king of the sky. This entity was the head of demons disrupting religious people in Buddhism. The reason Oda Nobunaga was related to this demon king is due to a letter to Takeda Shingen that he sign off as

33. ↑ There is no ' ' in the Chinese raws. But I feel like ' ' brings the feeling out more
34. ↑ 「 Gifu had the same pronunciation as godfather